

# Postal History Journal



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**British Decimal Changeover 1971**

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**Collins Axe Fancy Cancels**

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**Overview of U.S. Railroad Postal History**

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**Roessler: Refused & Censored**

# Postal History Journal

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# D-Day: Decimal Postage in the U.K.

by Lawrence Haber

*Let me tell you how it will be  
There's one for you, nineteen for me  
Cos I'm the taxman, yeah, I'm the taxman*

*Should five per cent appear too small  
Be thankful I don't take it all  
Cos I'm the taxman, yeah I'm the taxman*

- , 2017. George Harrison, "Taxman" 1966

For most of us, the opening lines to George Harrison's Beatles song "Taxman" appear a bit obscure: "... one for you, nineteen for me ..." In 1966, the allusion was utterly apparent to a pre-decimal Britain. Harold Wilson's Labour government had just instituted a 95% supertax. In the days of shillings and pence a tax of 95% would have been clearly stated and understood as 19 shillings in the pound— 19 for the taxman with one shilling remaining with the tax payer. Later on in the song, so as to accommodate those living in a decimal world, the conversion was made easier, "... should five per cent appear too small..." This "peculiar" structure of British currency, comprised of 12 pence to the shilling and 20 shillings to the pound, would remain in place until February 15, 1971 replaced with a decimalized pound with 100 new pence.

The pre-decimal system was both ancient and quite well suited to a pre-digital age. It was remarkably simple and efficient in transacting daily tasks in the local marketplace. First, we must understand that the pound sterling was a very considerable amount of money until quite recently. The actual means of daily exchange with shopkeepers and the like was most commonly the shilling. 12 pence to the shilling made daily market math simple. Half, quarter and thirds of a shilling were quickly calculated at 6 pence, 3 pence and 4 pence. In contrast, despite all of its digital finesse, a third-of-a-dollar has never been fully satisfactorily transacted.

Whatever its advantages, pre-decimal systems had been disappearing from the world's economies, the United States being the first English speaking nation to decimalize in 1792. Canada followed in the mid-19th century. The South African rand was decimalized in 1961, Australia in 1966, and New Zealand following in 1967.

Prior to 1971, the UK certainly did entertain the possibility of decimalization. There were numerous commissions and proposals to evaluate the change as long ago as the 1820s. But no meaningful progress was made until the 1960s following the successful transition to decimal in South Africa. Since the South African transition went quite smoothly, there was added impetus back in the UK. The (Halsbury) Committee for the Inquiry on Decimal Currency was formed in 1961. After its report was rendered in

1963, Parliament approved the Decimal Currency Act in May 1969. The Decimal Currency Board was formed to manage the transition, the date for the switch-over being set for February 15, 1971, thereafter known as Decimal Day or more simply, D Day.

When we as philatelists and postal historians approach this transition, we must understand that this impending change in currency was no triviality. Age-old custom would change along with the intuitive understanding regarding money and value on the part of the populace. People instinctively understood the worth of half a crown (two shillings and sixpence or 2/6) or the relative value of the airmail rate to North America at 1/6, or to Australia at 1/9 versus the inland 1<sup>st</sup> class rate of 5d. This may appear hard for us, in today's digital world, to understand, but for years afterward many Britons would ask "how much is that in the old money?"

The issues that confronted postal authorities ranged from transition dates, consideration relating the possibility of revision of stamp design, public and post office staff education and, not least of all, rate setting within a decimal context.

It was clearly inadvisable to totally switch the postal system over to decimal on a single day. That would have been an invitation for chaos. Instead there would be a transition over a 20-month period of time with three distinct phases. The intent was to help the public and the system adjust and adapt to the new currency.

Consequently there were three critical dates:

- June 17, 1970— a set of high-value large-format Machins would be issued. These would be directly equivalent to pre-decimal values. Pre-Decimal rates and values would prevail across the system
- February 15, 1971— a complete set of decimal stamps would be issued and rates would switch to a decimal basis. Pre-Decimal stamps would remain valid but their value would be calculated on a decimal basis
- February 29, 1972— last day of pre-decimal validity. After this date all pre-existing pre-decimal denominated stamps would be demonetized and their use invalidated. With this, the changeover would be complete.

Given that all the planning for D Day was occurring in the late 1960s, we must recall that the new series of GB definitives, the Machin series, had just been introduced in 1967. If this design were retained, it would necessitate a revision sufficient such that inadvertent error would be minimized. Consequently, the decision was made to fundamentally change the color scheme of the stamps, including not only the colors themselves but also, in many instances, graduating the color in the background from left to right. By doing so, the new decimal range of Machins could be made sufficiently distinct from the preceding pre-decimals so as to forestall confusion and mistaken use.

The UK General Post Office (GPO) took the opportunity in the period leading up to decimalization to research a range of new colors for the decimal definitives. The Applied Psychology Unit of the Medical Research Council at Cambridge University was asked to help define the parameters for a new palette of colors. At least 61 trials were printed and evaluated. All the colors used in the new decimal range were selected from

these trials. Some trial colors appeared on issued stamps immediately, others only years afterward, some were discarded and never used. (See Figure 1.)



*Figure 1: Three examples of Cambridge color trials prepared during the two years prior to decimalization. The 8d values were reserved for solid colors, the 1/- for light and graduated backgrounds and the 1/6 values for bi-colored proofs. Some of the colors tested were issued as part of the initial decimal sets, others much later and some colors were never used. The 8d Deep bright mauve shown here was “finally” issued in 1991 as a 39p. The 1/- Pale chestnut was part of the initial decimal set as a 7½p. The 1/6 deep ultramarine and pale bright blue color combination was never issued.*

The changes to color were fundamental on several levels. The most common stamps used were those for inland 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class use. The color for these uses, in the pre-decimal range, were Stewart Blue (5d), a very dark, almost black blue, and Vermilion (4d). The new colors for the same classes of service, in the new decimal range, would be Ultramarine (3p) and Pale Magenta (2½p). The distinctiveness in these stamps is immediately apparent. And, to make this distinctiveness even more evident, the 2½p Pale Magenta has its color graduated in the background, serving to significantly lighten the overall appearance of the stamp. (See Figure 2.)



*Figure 2: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class stamps, in their last pre-decimal and first decimal form. The color transition was intended to be immediately apparent.*

One of the consequences of all these color changes is that the entire Machin range was lightened and the colors appear brighter and more vibrant in the new decimal form than had been the case with the pre-decimals. The pre-decimals have an overall dark aspect to them. When there was a paper change shortly after decimalization, this color change is even more evident given the heightened whiteness aspect of the paper on which they were printed having been enhanced with more fluorescence in its composition.



Figure 3: Typical mixed currency franking cover of the period with the machine cancel slogan urging postal patrons to prepare for decimal currency and to “Take a Leaflet”.

The impending change in currency did not occur in a vacuum. The entire country was changing, and the postal affairs were merely one part of the operation. Publicity and efforts to educate were wide-spread. A postal booklet was widely distributed, its purpose was to educate the public on the changes to postal currency, rates and new stamps. There was more to this educational process than just leaflets. Machine cancels would trumpet out the admonition “Postal Currency/in the Post Office/TAKE A LEAFLET”. This machine cancel is extremely common amongst covers from the period immediately prior to and after D Day (see Figure 3).

There was more than the British public that needed to be educated. Postal clerks needed training and a set of postal training labels, printed in the new decimal colors was produced in the values of 2p, 2½p, 3p, 3½ and 4p (see Figure 4).

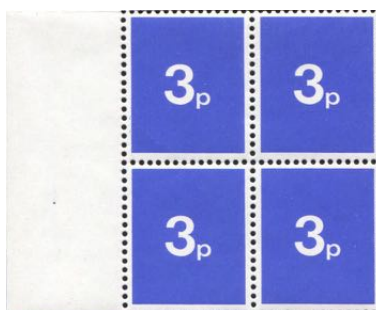


Figure 4: A marginal block of 4 of the Post Office training stamp for the new 1<sup>st</sup> class inland decimal rate.





Figure 5: Official GPO prepared FDC for the first issuance of UK decimal stamps, prior to D Day.

On 17 June 1970, the first step in postal decimalization occurred with the issuance of a set of high denomination (10p, 20p, and 50p) stamps in large format form as part of the Machin series. (see Figure 5) All three of these stamps had values that were simply and directly convertible into pre-decimal values. With a conversion rate of 100 new pence to 240 old pence, 10p is directly equivalent to 2/-, 20p to 4/- and 50p to 10/-.



Figure 6: Use of the new decimal high value stamps was largely confined to special services, heavier packets and the like. This item, used prior to D Day, required total franking of 7/6 (7 shillings and sixpence) comprised of a special delivery fee of 3/- and 4/6 for parcels weighting between 6 and 10 pounds. The three 10p stamps were worth in 6/- in combination, please note the pencil notation to this effect next to the 6d stamp.

As had always previously been somewhat of a convention, GB high-denomination stamps were not necessarily issued for “a purpose,” at least explicitly. With the pre-decimal 1<sup>st</sup> class inland rate set at 5d and airmail to Australia at 1/9, there are no “simple” single uses for these stamps. They served to facilitate postage needs for double-rated use under registration, or heavy parcels and the like, and that is how we typically see them on cover prior to D Day. (see Figure 6) Consequently, “proper” commercial uses of these first GB decimal stamps are not easily found.

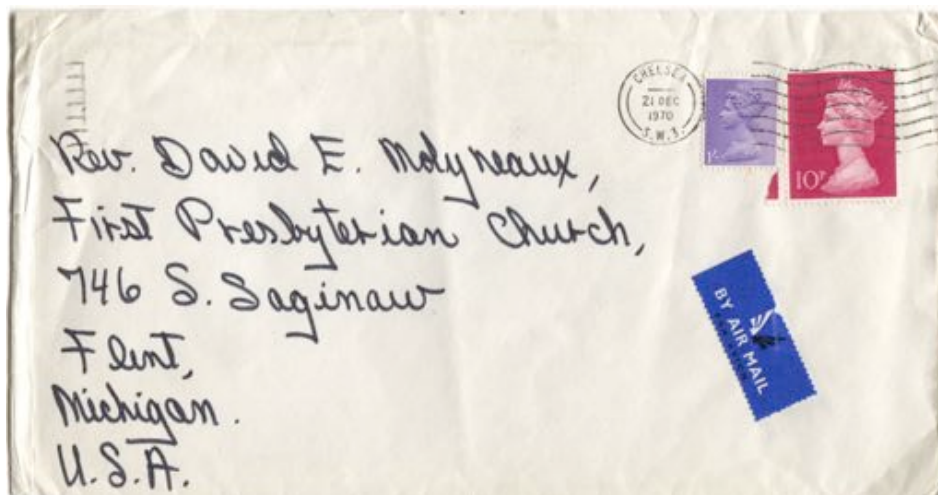


Figure 7: The the pre-decimal airmail rate to North America being set at 1/6, the new 10p decimal could be used for a double rated cover sent airmail to the US. The 10p stamp here was equivalent to 2/- which in combination with the 1/- pre-decimal combines to fulfill the 3 shilling rate.

With the airmail rate to North America set at 1/6 (7½p), a double-rated cover comes to 3/- (15p), such could be franked with the 10p in combination with a 1/- stamp. (see figure 7) Double-rated airmail covers to the Pacific, mostly Australia and New Zealand can be seen. The single rate to the Pacific was 1/9 (9p), double rating coming to 3/6 (17½p), clearly permitting use on the 10p in combination with existing pre-decimals (see Figure 8).

At the time, the registration rate was 3/- (15p) which, if combined with airmail to either North America (1/6 or 7½p) or the Pacific (1/9 or 9p), can provide a use for the 20p. (See Figure 9.)

Given the rate structure at the time, uses for the 50p would be truly exceptional and this writer has yet to see a valid use for the 50p prior to 1971. Even heavy parcels would not come close to needing a 50p stamp. The rate for a parcel between 6 and 10 pounds was “only” 4/6 (22½p), and we would still have a long way to go to make 50p.

Naturally, prepared first day covers were made available by the GPO. British convention is for all the issues in a set to be present on prepared FDCs. Hence a FDC would have had the 10p, 20p and 50p stamps, aggregating to a face value of 80p. To-





Figure 8: Use of the new decimal high values was similarly constrained to Australia. In this example, this doubled rated cover has the 10p, worth 2/- combined with the 1/- and 6d to compete the 3/6 franking for airmail double rated serve to Australia.



Figure 9: Use of the 20p prior to D Day. This cover sent airmail under registry, required total franking of 4/6, 3/- for registry and 1/6 for airmail service. The 20p being equivalent to 4/- combined with the 6d fulfilled the rate.

day, 80p is not a terribly significant amount of money. But in 1971, a pint of beer in Central London would have cost roughly 2/- or 10p. Eighty new pence was equivalent to 16/-, or the cost of 8 pints of beer. At today's typical price in London of £4.50 a pint, the franking value on these FDCs could be construed as equivalent to £36 in today's money.

As D Day approached, many practical issues needed to be confronted. First amongst these was how to “translate” the soon be “old” pre-decimal values to decimal. Going from a pound of 240 old pence to 100 pence meant that the old pence would be worth 100/240 in new pence. As a practical matter, no value less than six old pence could be converted to new pence without truncation and loss of value. A shilling is equal to 5p, 6 pence to 2½p (the UK having a ½p coin at the time), but 5d is equal to 2.08333p and as a practical matter the fractional value is dropped. In the new decimal world, an old 5d stamp would be worth only 2p. The Post Office booklet provided extensive conversion tables for postal patrons. (See Figure 10.)



Figure 10: The GPO decimal currency leaflet had an easy to use chart to help postal patrons adjust to mixed currency use.

In planning for D Day, it was obvious that rates would be set in decimal form, and given the mathematic issues it was inevitable that there would be either a loss of value or an element of postal inflation introduced as the rates were transitioned.

	Pre-decimal Rate		Decimal Rate	% Δ
	in Pre-decimal form	in Decimal equivalent	as published	
Inland 1 <sup>st</sup>	5d	2.083p	3p	44%
Inland 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4d	1.667p	2½p	50%
Surface Foreign	9d	3.75p	4p	7%
Surface Empire	5d	2.083p	2p	-4%
Airmail-Zone A	1/-	5p	5p	-
Airmail-Zone B	1/6	7½p	7½p	-
Airmail-Zone C	1/9	9p	9p	-
Registry	3/-	15p	15p	-
Special Delivery	3/-	15p	15p	-

As can be noted, there was a very significant increase in the domestic 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class rates, close to 50%. In contrast, overseas rates were essentially unchanged. Most domestic rates had been reset in 1968 and, prior to that, in 1965. The same timing pertained to surface overseas rates. Airmail rates had last been changed in 1966. One might conjecture that domestic rates were “ready” for a “normal” reset in 1971 and that such was impressed into the new decimal domestic 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class rates. Alternatively, one could point out that that from 1971 to 1996, the basic inland 1<sup>st</sup> class inland rate has increased 21 times with an annual rate of increase of 9% over this period. What had cost 3p in 1971, now costs 65p, a 2,000% increase over the last 46 years. Many older Britons contend that the “new money” ushered in an era of inflation since people “lost” an intuitive feel for the value of money, and that this is reflected in postal rates.

Rates set, the workhorses of the postal system, the basic definitives, in decimal form, were prepared. 12 new decimalized small-format Machins to replace the pre-decimal ranges. The values issues were ½p, 1p, 1½p, 2p, 2½p, 3p, 3½p, 4p, 5p, 6p, 7½ and 9p. All these would serve to fit specific rates or as make-up values. Make-ups are especially necessary both to achieve rates and in particular help make-up a rate in combination with pre-decimals, since these would remain valid for use for another year.

As we approach D Day everything is in readiness. The public is educated, postal staff is trained, new rates are published, new stamps are printed. There was one “minor” inconvenience: on January 20, 1971, a national postal strike was called. All unionized staff walked off their jobs and the postal system came to a complete stop. The strike remained in effect until matters were settled and staff returned to work on March 8. All main post offices were closed. The only post offices remaining open were a number of small sub-offices. These were generally tied to small local retail establishments and hence non-unionized. In an effort to help keep the nation’s communications moving, for the first time since it had been asserted during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the post office voluntarily allowed its postal monopoly to stand aside and private domestic couriers were permitted.

With the main post offices closed down, none of the prepared FDCs could be cancelled “on the day”. Since they were eventually processed after D Day, they bear a variety of hand stamps stating “POSTING DELAYED BY THE POSTAL STRIKE 1971.” (See Figure 11.)



Figure 11: A GPO prepared FDC for Decimal Day, February 15, 1971. Please note the hand stamp explaining the strike-delayed posting.

Naturally, given license to fill a void, some of the private courier services prepared their own FDCs to welcome in the new decimal age. (See Figure 12.) The post system of the British military remained open during the duration and their prepared FDCs are readily available today. (See Figure 13.) And, lastly, with there being some small sub-

Figure 12: A FDC marking Decimal Day prepared by the Randall Postal Service, one of the many private carriers operating during the 1971 postal strike.

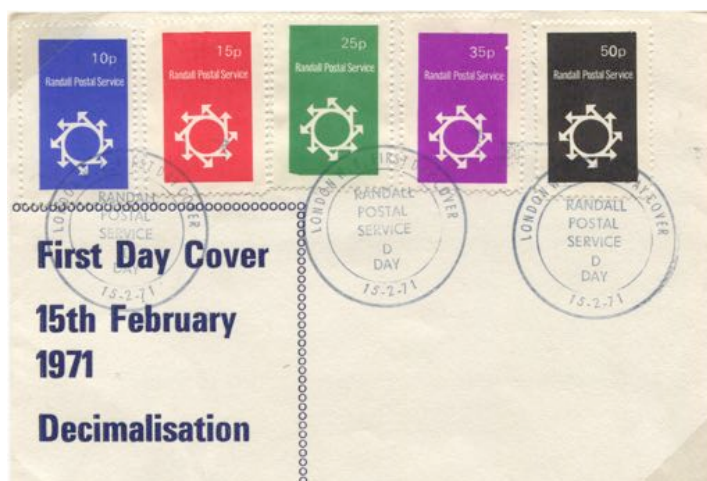


Figure 13: The only “official” UK postal system that continued to operate unimpeded during the 1971 postal strike was that operating by the British military. This is an officially prepared FDC marking D Day.

offices open, privately prepared FDC were produced and postmarked “on the day” by these small offices. (See Figure 14)

Given the strike situation which had been extended for seven weeks, upon their return, postal workers were presented with a literal mountain of mail and they had to cope with a fundamental change in currency. Postal patrons were asked to not only be patient as service was returned, but to defer asking the post office to handle troublesome pieces. In some instances, particularly with regard to misfranked pieces, the GPO delayed delivery until it could cope with the backlog and these pieces may lack a date and time stamp in the cancel, very unusual for UK mail. (See figure 15.)



Figure 14: The small Tayport station in Fifeshire, Scotland. One of a relatively few number of small sub-offices that remained opened, most of which were operating by local grocery stores and the like.

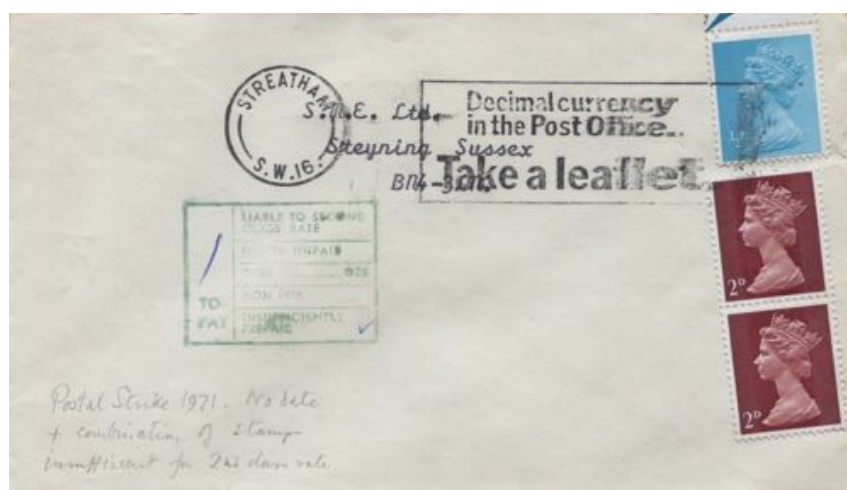
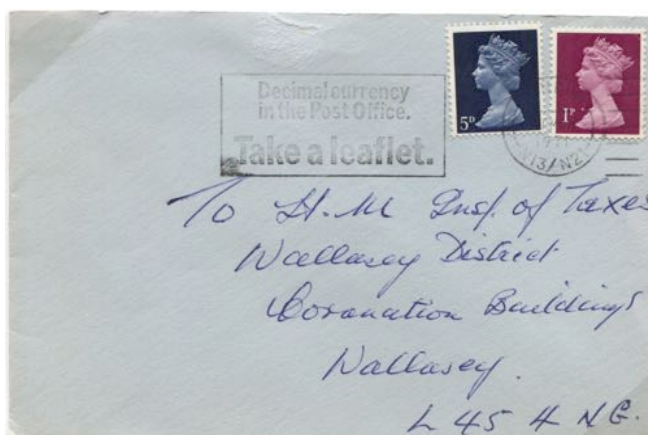


Figure 15: Following the resolution of the 1971 postal strike, the authorities requested that patrons limit their mailings and seek not to overtax the system as work returned to normal. This cover having been posted bore insufficient postage as the two 2d stamps, now worth 1½p, in combination with the decimal ½p, did not yield sufficient value to make even a 2nd class rate.

Once back to work after the strike, postal clients and workers needed to contend with the new decimal denominated rates. Clearly, the new supplies of decimal stamps on hand for sale made this simple. Straight forward 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> inland letters franked with the new 3p and 2½p stamps presented few issues for all involved. But what of the pre-decimals laying in desk drawers across the Nation? To run down already sold supplies of pre-decimals, the pre-decimals could be used either on their own (presuming sufficient franking) or in combination with new decimals. The most typical frankings to be seen are a 1p plus the old 5d 1<sup>st</sup> class stamp yielding a total franking of 3p, (see fig-

ure 16) or either the 1p with the 4p, or a ½p with the 5d to fulfill the 2<sup>nd</sup> class rate. Similar combinations would be suitable for overseas frankings and these are now most common in the country of their destination. Given the extent of the change, based on the relative lack of misfranked covers, the entire operation appears to have gone very smoothly.

*Figure 16: A 'classic' example of a decimal transitionary mixed franking. The old 1<sup>st</sup> class stamp, the 5d in combination with a decimal 1p to make the new 3p 1<sup>st</sup> class rate.*



*Figure 17: We have a FDC canceled on the date in a small Welsh sub-office, the only stamp being the new 5p. The new decimal 1<sup>st</sup> class rate is 3p, the old pre-decimal rate having been 5d, is it possible that the postal patron got confused and thought that the value merely switched from “d” to “p”, or was it merely an accidental over franking?*

Misfrankings there were. At this date, it is difficult to completely discern the intent of the postal client, but these range from confusing a decimal stamp for a pre-decimal stamp, using insufficient make-up value to achieve a rate, or the occasional use of obsolete rates. (See figure 17.)

Most remarkably, the Nation was in a position to demonetize the pre-decimals 12½ months after the introduction of decimal rates. From March 1, 1972, pre-decimal denominations would be marked as invalid. For inland mail, the GPO would process and charge the recipient at the 2<sup>nd</sup> class inland rate plus an equal amount as a penalty. Pre-decimals continued to show up in the mail stream for years thereafter, but now, so many years later, it would not be surprising for a pre-decimal to slip through given the lack of familiarity by postal workers today.

All in all, despite many potential obstacles, the long hoped for process of decimalization in the UK was conducted with efficiency and was swiftly executed and brought to a conclusion.

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**Lawrence Haber**, a retired Swiss banker, is a member of too many of the principal philatelic societies both in the US and UK. In addition to his interest in UK decimalization, he collects and has exhibited across a wide variety of interests ranging from plate XI of the penny black, to the United States stamps and postal history of 1909, and to the pre-1996 range of GB Machins.

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**COVER ILLUSTRATION:** The Postal Museum of Great Britain has recently re-opened, after a dramatic rebuilding at Phoenix Place in London. Throughout the renovations, the archive has been open to researchers and, as their promotionals say, the collection “spans five centuries of history, covering everything from groundbreaking design and quirky technology to the intimacy of personal letters.” One of the opening exhibits focused on the iconic image of Queen Elizabeth II created by Arnold Machin, and first used on Great Britain's definitive postage stamps in 1967. Machin had been renowned for his work with Wedgewood potteries, and first sculpted a bas-relief of the Queen's head in clay and moulds. The printing essays were then completed by Harrisons & Sons using photographs of the sculpture - which remains in the vault of the Postal Museum. Our cover shows a 50th anniversary souvenir featuring the “Post and Go” Machin stamps in colors inspired by the original definitives. The museum offers a daily fun-for-the-whole-family experience. Head of Collections Chris Taft has for over 13 years been involved with a number of projects connected with the mail railway that ceased operation in 2003 but which has been retooled as a visitor attraction.

# The Collinsville Axe Cancellations

By James W. Milgram, M.D.

The black outline of an axe postmark from Collinsville, Connecticut on stampless covers is one of the classic fancy American markings. The purchase of one of the other markings used at this town led the writer to study the history of this very interesting town and its axe postal markings. The story goes beyond postal history in its significance.

Most towns in the country were settled by a few people moving into a region because of advantages such as location, proximity to water, fuel, or good land. But Collinsville was a town carved out of another town, Canton, Connecticut, because of a successful factory, the axe factory known as Collins & Company. Two brothers, Samuel W. and David C. Collins, together with their cousin William Wells opened an axe factory in 1826 at the site of an old gristmill along the Tunxis River in South Canton. In 1830 the village where the factory was located was named Collinsville, and the river was renamed to the Farmington River.

The company produced the first ready to use axes in the United States. Before that, edged tools were made by local blacksmiths or were imported as unground instruments from Europe. For 140 years this company produced a high grade steel product used all over the world for different sharp steel products. In addition to axes, their machetes were considered the best in South America. Collins tools were used almost exclusively for the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

The location for the factory was partly chosen because of the availability of high quality iron produced by a local company, Watkinson & Co. Making axes involved a four-step process: forging, grinding, tempering, and polishing the metal head. Immense grinding stones were brought from Nova Scotia. Later the company branched out into many other products. Samuel Collins credits Elisha K. Root, who joined the company in 1832, with the improvement and invention of many machines. In 1845, Root left to supervise the Colt Armory in Hartford. It should come as no surprise that Collins made bayonets for some of the Colt rifles during the Civil War.

The black axe-shaped postmark reading "COLLINSVILLE/ CONN." is what I term an arch postmark (Figure 1). An arc is purely semicircular; an arch has also a horizontal element. This is an arch postmark in a fancy axe-shaped frame. The date and the month were written into the top of the postmark. The 1839 letter in Figure 1 was addressed to a subsidiary of the Collins company in Hartford. It appears that the postmarks and the address are in the same handwriting. One of the other black axe markings in the writer's collection is a postmaster's free frank from Collinsville in a different handwriting but from 1836. The marking is listed in the catalog as being known from 1832 to 1839.





Figure 1. "COLLINSVILLE CONN." arch shaped marking in axe frame, ms "14 Feb" (1839) to Hartford, Conn. "6" for under 30 mile postal rate.



Figure 2. "COLLINSVILLE CONN." arch shaped marking in axe frame in red ink, ms "23 Feb" to Sheldon, N.Y. "18 $\frac{3}{4}$ " for 150 to 400 mile postal rate.

A similar marking struck in red ink is known only from 1840. An example of this much more rare marking is shown in Figure 2. After that date only typical circular dated postmarks are known during most of the next two decades.

However, in 1860 or 1861 a new version of the black axe head cancellation is known. Figure 3 shows a well-struck example with a stamp canceled "PAID 3" (the cover has a Philatelic Foundation certificate). In my opinion this is the same canceling device as was used for stampless covers. The dates were handstamped separately by a

device that appears to have held both the date (above) and the month (below). If one looks at the figure carefully, one can see that there is a light second strike below the more bold strike. I believe the postmaster first struck the axe postmark and then struck the month and date stamp with moveable type.

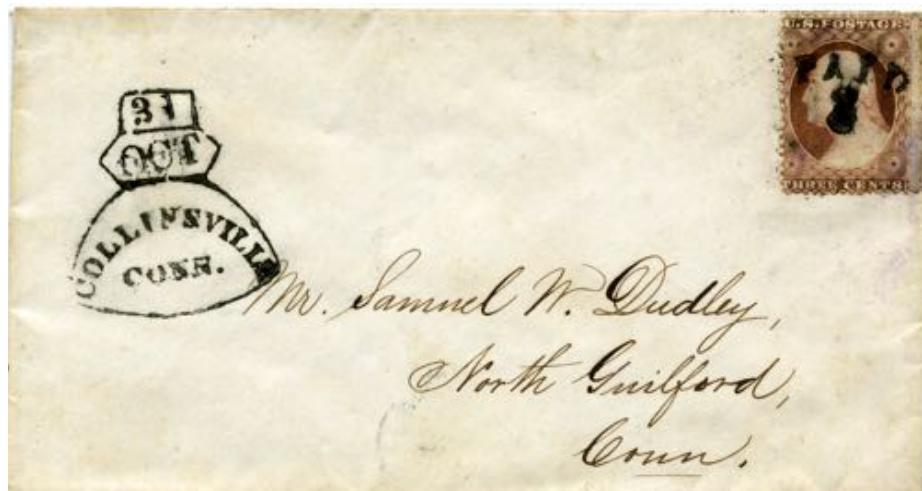


Figure 3. "COLLINSVILLE CONN." arch shaped marking in axe frame, handstamped "31 OCT" over top of frame where date was previously handwritten during earlier period, "PAID 3" on 3 cent

Figure 4. Axe shaped post-marking device on 3 cent 1857 stamp, town post-mark "COLLINSVILLE CT. JAN 28".



Finally there is a completely new marking, a small axe shaped killer. This is shown in Figure 4 on a letter with a three cent 1857 stamp (also with a Philatelic Foundation certificate), and a small circular town marking. This small axe marking is much more common on three cent stamps of the 1861 series, and I have it on a 3 cent entire also.

Figure 5 shows the only known example of a cover with both markings, the large axe for town cancel and the small axe to cancel the stamp.



Figure 5. Example of the use of both the large (type II) and the small axe shaped postmarking devices on a stamped envelope. [R.A. Siegel Auction Galleries]

**Editors' Note:** We refer readers to the article by W.J. Duffney, "The Three Collinsville Axes" on the web site [cpostalhistory.com](http://cpostalhistory.com). In addition to more background information, and more covers, there is information on the postal arrangements. At first, the Collins brothers arranged in 1828 for a Special Post Office at South Canton (the dateline that Samuel Collins preferred), contracting with Oliver Couch to take his four-horse stage off the Albany Turnpike and serve his factories on the route to Farmington and Hartford. When the mail volume increased to warrant an official post office in 1831, the Post Office Department chose the name Collinsville to prevent confusion with Canton and North Canton.

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**Dr. James W. Milgram**, an orthopedic surgeon, is very active in The Collectors Club of Chicago. He has written several books focusing on 19th century postal history - his most recent, *American Illustrated Letter Stationery 1819-1899*, was previewed in *PHJ* 164, June 2016.

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#### **AWARDS at Stampshow 2017, Richmond, Virginia:**

Terence Hines, Director of our society, won the Literature Reserve Grand and Gold Medal for A History of Postal Service in Hanover New Hampshire since 1761, which was reviewed in *PHJ* 166, February 2017.

Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris won a Gold Medal in Literature for the 2016 issues of this journal.

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# U.S. Railroad Contract Mail Routes in Context

an expanded review by Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris

*U.S. Contract Mail Routes by Railroad (1832-1875)* by Hugh V. Feldman, RPSL. The Collectors Club of Chicago 2017. 1096 pages, color, hardbound plus DVD. Available from Leonard Hartman \$97.50 + \$10 shipping to U.S. addresses. [leonard@pbbooks.net](mailto:leonard@pbbooks.net)



## Chase

With the publication in 1929 of *The Three Cent Stamp of the United States 1851-57 Issue* Carroll Chase M.D. earned a reputation as the dean of ‘scientific philately’ in America.<sup>1</sup> A collaborative work spanning twenty years *The Three Cent Stamp* also contained a check list of railroad postmarks 1838 to 1861 which remained the basis for C.W. Remele’s *United States Railroad Postmarks 1837 to 1861* in 1958, to say nothing of Charles L. Towle’s final word: *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks* in 1986. Hugh V. Feldman’s book, *U.S. Contract Mail Routes by Railroad (1832-1875)*, belongs to a different story.

## Norona

When in 1928 Delf Norona<sup>2</sup> became temporary secretary of the newly-established Stampless Cover Unit of the American Philatelic Society, he uncovered vast quantities of original source documents and published them freely, including maps.

“Photostats of four useful maps have been selected by your secretary from the hundreds of maps in the Map Division of the Library of Congress as being most useful for our purposes. (Sizes are approximately 20 x 16 inches.) 1. A post office map, showing post-roads, post-offices, distances between offices, stage roads, &c Published in 1796. 2. Map of the United States in 1813, showing towns, roads, &c. 3. A similar map, showing also canal and steamship routes, 1825. 4. Map published in 1843, showing also railroads and with a valuable table giving populations of cities and towns. A set of the four maps will be furnished for \$5.75, about actual cost, and for an additional 25 cents there will be included a very quaint map, being the earliest known map of post roads in the Colonies, published some time before 1732, by H. Moll.”<sup>3</sup>

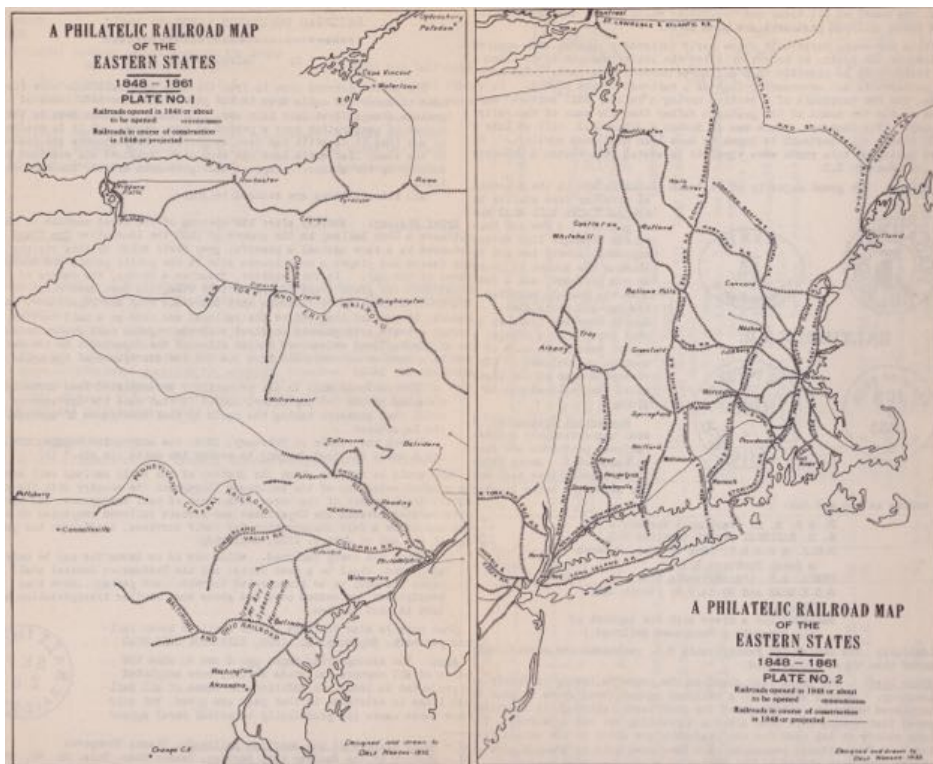
Norona was appointed chairman of a handbook committee of the APS in 1931 and promised to begin the publication of an encyclopedia. *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History* volume one appeared in 1933. Reprinted was Chase’s checklist of railroad postmarks 1838 to 1861 (see Figure 1) to which Norona had added a brief history and maps, something Chase specifically acknowledged.<sup>4</sup> Plates one and two show the railroads as they existed in 1848 as distinct from those which were projected then to be completed by 1861 (Figures 2 and 3).

Even as he was attempting to raise funds for publishing subsequent volumes of the *Cyclopedia*, Norona was finding philatelists to provide expert articles. Among them, in



Name	Size	Before 1847	1847	1851	1857	Remarks
NEW YORK & PHILA. R.R. ....	30	Red, Blue	Red	Red, Blk	Blk	Dot under A of PHILA.
NEW YORK & PHILA. R.R. ....	25	Blue	Blue	Blk	Blk	No dot under A of PHILA. in the 1851 period. Dot under A in the 1847 period, but it is probably the same postmark.
NEW YORK & PHILA. R.R. ....	32			Blk	Blk	Period after NEW of NEW YORK.
N. CAROLINA R.R. ....	34			Blk	Blk	North Carolina R.R.
MOB. CAN. R.R. N.C. ....	29½			Blk	Blk	North Carolina R.R., North Carolina. There is some doubt as to this one.
NORTH PA. R.R. ....	25			Blk	Blk	North Pennsylvania R.R.
NORTHERN R.R. ....	33	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	(See Plate G.)
NORTHERN R.R. ....	32	Blue	Blue	Blk	Blk	

Figure 1: Chase's Check List - portion of page 14 of volume one of article 3 of the *Cyclopedia*, showing the alphabetical arrangement of railroad postmarks, sized, framed in time, and sometimes remarked for the name of a railroad.



Figures 2 & 3: Philatelic Railroad Map, “designed and drawn by Delf Norona 1932” to show railroads both constructed and projected in 1848.

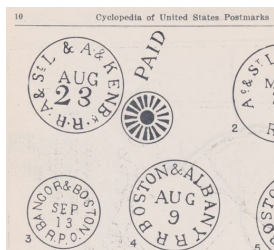
the February 1935 *American Philatelist*, Arthur G. Hall was announced as “leader in charge of study relating to Railroad Postmarks to 1882.”

## Hall

Arthur G. Hall’s by-line on behalf of the Postal Markings Unit first appeared in March 1935 *AP* under “Three Railroads,” calling attention to the difficulty in associating a railroad marking with a particular railroad. Volume two of the *Cyclopedia*, an-

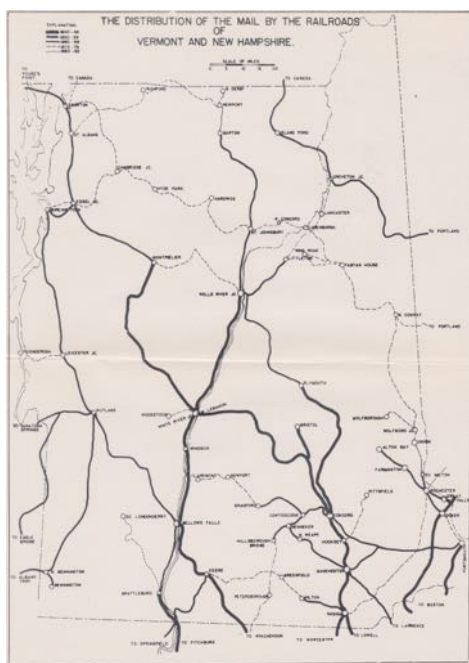


nounced along with Hall's activities, contained his Article 31: "Distribution of Mail by Railroads in New England (to 1882)" which provided a manifesto to connect the checklist of postal markings with a parallel account of "the manner in which the Post Office Department organized the mail service on the railroads and the subsequent changes which were brought about by the increase in the volume of mail to be handled, resulting from the growth of the country. ... from the point of view of the actual service on the railroads of the United States."<sup>5</sup>



Postmark Number and State Number	Railroad Name	Before 1847	1847-1851	1851-1857	1857-1861	1861-1869	1869-1873	Bank Note
1) Me. 4	Atlantic & St. Lawrence & Androscoggin & Kenebeck R. R.		Red	Red	Blue	Black		
2) Same	Same			Red	Blue	Black		
3) Me. 27	Bangor & Boston R. P. O.							Black 1873
4) Mass. 1	Boston & Albany R. R.	Red	Red	Red	Red	Black		
5) Mass. 13	Same	Red	Red	Red	Red	Black		
6) Same	Same		Red	Red	Black	Black	Black	
7) Same	Boston & Albany R. P. O.							Black 1873

Boston & Lowell	Boston to Lowell	1836	26	1854*	
B. & L. Nashua & Lowell	Boston to Nashua	1840-43	41		
	Boston & St. Albans R. P. O.	1869			
	St. Albans & Boston R. P. O.	1881			No. 2
Boston & Lowell	Lawrence to Lowell	1849	14		
Boston & Lowell	Ayer or Groton Jc. to Lowell	1849	17	1873*	
	Lowell & Ayer R. P. O.	1882			No. 3
Boston & Lowell	Somerville Sta. to Concord	1875	16		



Figures 4, 5, 6 & 7: Hall's railroad mail manifest. 4 & 5 - numbered postmarks are identified with a railroad; 6 - railroads are given a tabulation of mail contracts referring back to the postal markings; 7 - a map displays the chronological elaboration of the railroad mails upon the geography.

Hall's equivalent of Chase's checklist for New England is fully illustrated (Figure 4) and indexed to the name of railroads listed in the post office contracts (Figure 5). Another tabulation is arranged by state to reflect the names of railroads, their termini, and their periods of contract service in the carrying of mail (Figure 6). Route agent service is indicated where known and, in a remarks column, reference is made to a potentially relevant postal marking in the check list. It is evident that there

are many contract routes without Route Agents. This tabular information is directly reflected on Hall's maps in which the chronological succession of railroad mail contracts is elaborated by the thickness of line (Figure 7).

Norona resigned from the handbook committee when the Board refused to fund the continuing project, leaving Hall with Elliott Perry and J.W. Stoll as a reconstituted committee for overseeing the publication of handbooks.

Subsequently, according to Remele,<sup>6</sup> Hall published, serially, in *Postal Markings* magazine, beginning in 1941, an alphabetic list of railroad postmarks "most of them illustrated" which ended after the letter L. After a substantial hiatus, the balance of the list was published in issues 6 through 12 of *The Chronicle* of the 3 cent 1851 Study Unit.<sup>7</sup> Issue 6 included information of markings on other stamp issues, but, gradually, just the 1851 issue prevailed to register the alphabetical check list in time. There were no maps, and no information about the railroads, and no manifesto.

### **Remele**

When the American Philatelic Society published Remele's continuation of Chase's work in 1958, Remele acknowledged that Chase's 1929 work:

contains the most complete and accurate list yet published. It was this chapter, plus the encouragement of Dr. Chase himself, that started me off on the trail that has led finally to the present study. Particularly it was the last paragraph of the chapter which reads: 'If space permitted it would be interesting to give a few salient facts regarding each of the railroads in the list, as well as a map showing each route. I hope someone better versed than I am in railroad history may sometime undertake this.'<sup>8</sup>

Remele provided, under headings alphabetically arranged by Route Agent marking, a compilation not only of periods of use, but also with a tabulation of postal routes, and their frequencies, upon which the agents may have served. This is followed by a history of the railroad including a station list, and sometimes accompanied by a sketch map.

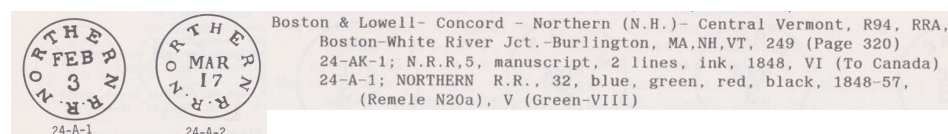
### **Towle**

Charles L. Towle dedicated his 1986 *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks*<sup>9</sup> to the pioneers of the study of U.S. railway postal history. Towle had assisted with Remele's 1958 work, that inspired him to join Henry A. Meyer in preparing a 1968 catalog that extended the markings study from 1861 to 1886. After joining the Mobile Post Office Society, Towle began a complete cataloging of all railroad postmarks - towards the four-volume U.S. Transit Markings catalog published 1975 to 1981. "During all this period there had been one fundamental gap in our knowledge - the routes worked and the route agents working in the 1837 to 1861 period."

With John Kay digging in the National Archives, he and Towle produced a chronology of route agent routes opposite groups of route agents. Kay summarized:

"there was no close correlation between mail contracts with the railroads and the route agents runs. This was due both to the constant growth of the railroads and the mail routes, as well as the fact that the mail agent runs were frequently between cities involving up to as high as four or five individual mail contracts in a particular mail agent run."<sup>10</sup>

The postal history of railroad mail as it had developed into the studies of Towle and Kay was caught up in a 'bone pile' of trying to match route agents to railroads. Route Agent postal markings would not reward Hall's manifest interest in investigating the relationship between the development of contract railroad mail and the growth of the country.



(R94) Boston & Lowell R.R. incorporated June 5, 1830 and opened 27 mile line June 24, 1835. Nashua & Lowell R.R. incorporated April 28, 1835 and opened Lowell-Nashua, 14.5 miles, Oct. 8, 1838. From Oct. 1, 1858 until Dec. 1877 the two lines operated as the Boston, Lowell & Nashua R.R. (cont).

(R94) -cont. The Concord R.R. was chartered June 27, 1835 and opened 35 mile railroad Nashua-Manchester-Concord, N.H., Sept. 27, 1842. Northern R.R. (N.H.) chartered June 18, 1844 and organized July 15, 1845. Line completed Concord to Canaan, 54 miles, Sept. 1847 and to West Lebanon (White River Jct., Vt.), 69 miles, Nov. 29, 1847. All of the preceding lines became part of the Boston & Lowell system, which was leased to Boston & Maine R.R. June 22, 1887.

Vermont Central R.R. chartered Oct. 31, 1843 and completed from White River Jct. to Bethel, June 26, 1848; to Roxbury, Sept. 17, 1848; to Montpelier Jct. June 2, 1849 and to Burlington, Vt., 104 miles, Dec. 31, 1849. Total distance from Boston to Burlington via this route was 249 miles. Vermont Central became Central Vermont R.R., still operating, but owned by the Canadian National R.R.

Figures 8, 9, & 10: Towle's catalog routes and railroad notes. Alphabetical check list of numbered postal markings refer to a date of use and indexed to railroad corporate biographies in the historical notes, a separately published volume.

How could they? Route agent postal markings were evidence of an extraordinary service of the agent, for the handling of way letters, rather than for his essential service to secure and to receive and distribute the pouched mails at the stations along the way. With respect to the pouched mails, altogether letters and newspapers, the route agents were not always present. Selah R. Hobbie, First Assistant PMG, reported in 1848 the presence of 47 route agents to serve the country (see Figure 11). During that year, the railroad and steamboats carried the mails nine million miles - averaging 200,000 miles per route agent (at an average of twenty-five miles per hour, 8,000 hours of railroad travel time per year, 160 hours a week).

Part of an explanation might be that letter mail constituted a rather insignificant part in the weight of the mails, bulked up with newspapers prepaid at cheap rates since 1792. To manage exponentially increasing loads, horse mails had been classified by mode and frequency in order to produce economies of scale. The Postal Reform law of 1845 not only provided cheap prepaid postage rates for letters but also framed railroad mail contracts in three classes, ultimately figured by frequency: once, twice, or thrice

daily.<sup>11</sup> Letter mails may not have accompanied newspaper mails on the second and third trips. Perhaps, then, only a half of the mail runs included pouched letters: 80 rather than 160 hours per week, perhaps 10 or 12 hours a day per agent. This suggests that route agents might have accompanied all pouched letter mails.

CONTRACT OFFICE.  
*Number of mail contractors, route agents, local agents, and mail messengers in the several sections.*

Sections.	Contractors.	Route agents.	Local agents.	Mail messengers.
New England.....	409	15	.....	42
New York.....	386	11	.....	53
Middle.....	755	8	1	89
Southern.....	644	13	.....	20
Northwestern.....	708	.....	4	23
Southwestern.....	724	.....	16	12
Total.....	4,017	47	21	180

S. B. HOBBS,  
First Assistant Postmaster General.

Figure 11: Route Agents, Local Agents, Mail Messengers 1848. The railroad mails required new connections to post offices.

Railroad contracts, which had been engaged by Hall and Remele in an attempt to emplace the route agent activity within the historical context, was all but abandoned by Towle. Specifically, he chose to relegate “railway historical reference notes” to a separate volume (see Figure 10),<sup>12</sup> to be

used by that specialized group of interested route agent postmark collectors who: (1) have a particular interest in railroad history, (2) a desire to include railroad information write-ups when mounting their collections of route agent postmark covers in albums, or (3) are railway postmark collectors needing such information in order to prepare pages for postal history exhibits at shows.<sup>13</sup>

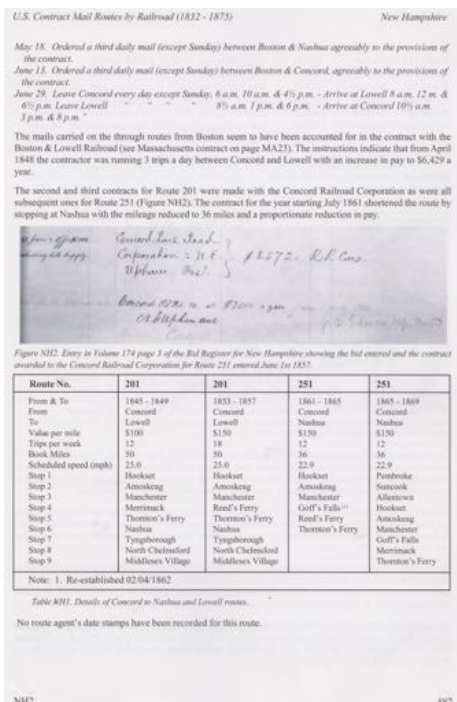
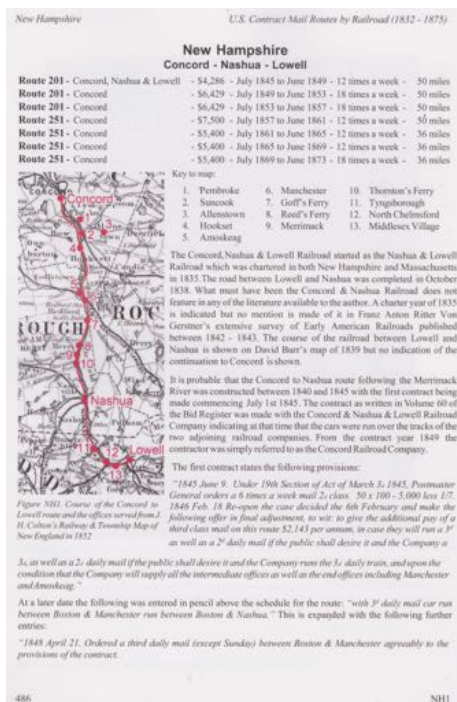
By contrast, the publishers of Feldman’s new book hope: “readers with non-philatelic interest will also find this work of value in the study of small towns ...”

## Feldman

The Concord, Nashua and Lowell Railroad had no recorded route agent markings. The line, therefore, did not get noticed in Chase’s checklist, deserving no account in Norona’s expansion of the checklist in volume one of the *Cyclopedia*. In the volume two article superintended by Hall, the Lowell by Nashua to Concord railroad line is tabulated, service having been started in 1843, with a route agent appointed some time before 1854. For Towle’s reference to the corporate history of this railroad, see Figure 10.

Feldman (see Figures 12 & 13), writes that the road between Lowell and Nashua was completed in October 1838. “What must have been the Concord and Nashua Railroad does not feature in any of the literature available to the author.” Feldman cites Towle 1986 but not the historical supplement which, after all, contained nothing about railroad mail contracts. Feldman’s default account here, as throughout his book, for early development of railroads in the U.S. was a survey by Franz Anton Ritter Von Ger-





Figures 12 & 13: Feldman's Railroad Mail Geography. Compiled from manuscript registers in NARA, printed government documents, maps, timetables, station lists.

stner. But Von Gerstner made no notice of this line either. Noting that the railroad is shown between Lowell and Nashua on Burr's postal route map of 1839, Feldman goes on to describe the first Nashua to Concord NH railroad mail contract of 1845.

The PMG in his annual report to the President of December 2, 1843, provided the first of what became an annual tabulation of railroad mail contracts in operation as of November 4, 1843 (see Figure 14). Route 201, Concord to Lowell, 12 times, \$2,958. Although Feldman reproduces, on a disk that accompanies his book, all these tabulations, his primary resources for contract information in the text were the manuscript records at the National Archives.

Figure 14: Railroad Mail Service 1843.

Statement of railroad mail service, as in operation November 4, 1843.

States.	Number of route.	Termini.	Distance.	Total distance in each State.	Number of weekly trips.	Annual cost.	Annual cost in each State.	Remarks.
Maine -	86	Portland to Fortmouth -	28	28	12	-	\$5,000 00	
New Hampshire -	201	Concord to Lowell -	50	50	12	-	2,958 00	
Massachusetts -	401	Boston to Portsmouth -	54	54	13	\$10,000 50	-	Embracing side supply.
Do -	400	Boston to Dover -	67	67	6	5,909 00	-	Embracing side supply, and extending 7 miles further, to the junction with the Portsmouth railroad, without additional pay.
Do -	404	Boston to Lowell -	56	56	14	3,000 00	-	
Do -	411	Boston to Worcester -	45	45	13	8,500 00	-	
Do -	414	Boston to Providence -	43	43	14	7,000 00	-	Embracing side supply.
Do -	443	Worcester to Springfield -	55	55	13	8,250 00	-	
Do -	481	Mansfield to Taunton -	12	12	12	1,500 00	-	
Do -	495	Taunton to New Bedford -	21	21	12	2,100 00	-	
Do -	518	Springfield to Albany -	100	100	6	10,000 00	-	
				423			56,993 50	



Alvin F. Harlow considers in detail what happened after the 1838 penetration of New Hampshire by the railroad to Nashua - progress halted because of local hostility to railroads: "they would ruin innkeepers, stage lines, teamsters and horse breeders, alter the whole face of society." But, with the involvement of the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company adjacent to the new community of Manchester NH, the line was completed to Manchester by July 1, 1842, and Concord by September 7. This completion further raised the politics of railroad rights of way throughout the state of New Hampshire:

At a meeting at Lebanon in 1843 to discuss the project of a line from Concord to the Connecticut River, Professor Charles B. Haddock of Dartmouth College delivered an eloquent address, chiding the state for its backwardness and opposition to progress. 'If we cannot maintain our position on the open field of generous and manly conflict,' said he, 'let us give up the State and go off in a body to Iowa or Oregon. Let it never be said that New Hampshire can live only within a Chinese wall that shuts out the enterprize [sic] and prohibits the intercourse of the rest of the world.'

Railroad development was blocked for another five years.<sup>14</sup>

Francis Cabot Lowell had jumpstarted the textile industry in America with plans pirated in 1810 from the great textile machinery in Manchester, England. In 1820 Lowell built mills that were powered by the Merrimack River and was able to link to Atlantic commerce by the Middlesex Canal that had been completed on the last day of 1803. The canal stockholders in 1808 had improved navigation on the Merrimack River, so that an important line of communication was established to support the Industrial Revolution occurring at Lowell as well as north and south along the river.<sup>15</sup>

Spanning several days in August and September 1839, Henry David Thoreau with his brother James began a voyage in a vessel of their own making from Concord MA down the Concord River and up the Merrimack toward Concord NH. The first of September: "By noon we were let down into the Merrimack through the locks at Middlesex just above Pawtucket Falls." There, Thoreau describes Lowell as "the city of spindles and Manchester of America, which sends its cotton cloth around the globe." He was traveling with the newly-published (May 1839) *Gazetteer of New England* (Figure 15) which said of Lowell: "This city, the American Manchester, is remarkable for the extent of its water power, its rapid growth, and the height to which it has raised the American character, by the perfection of its manufactures." Facing the waters of the Merrimack, Thoreau fell into

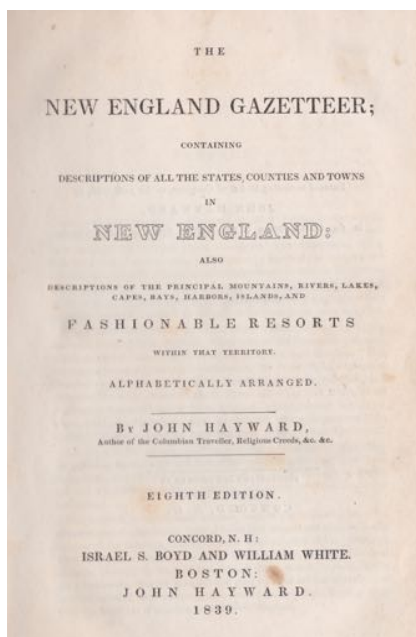


Figure 15: John Hayward's *Gazetteer of New England* for 1839. Geographic settings were wanted for the national imagination.

contemplation of its origins in time and in geography, but particularly the geography.

Standing here at its mouth, look up its sparkling stream to its source, - a silver cascade which falls all the way from the White Mountains to the sea, - and behold a city on each successive plateau, a busy colony of human beaver around every fall. Not to mention Newburyport and Haverhill, see Lawrence, and Lowell, and Nashua, and Manchester, and Concord, gleaming one above the other. When at length it has escaped from under the last of the factories it has a level and unmolested passage to the sea, a mere *waste water*, as it were, bearing little with it but its fame; its pleasant course revealed by the morning fog which hangs over it, and the sails of the few small vessels which transport the commerce of Haverhill and Newburyport. But its real vessels are railroad cars (see Figure 17), and its true and main stream, flowing by an iron channel further south, may be traced by a long line of vapors amid the hills, which no morning wind ever disperses, to where it empties into the sea at Boston.<sup>16</sup>

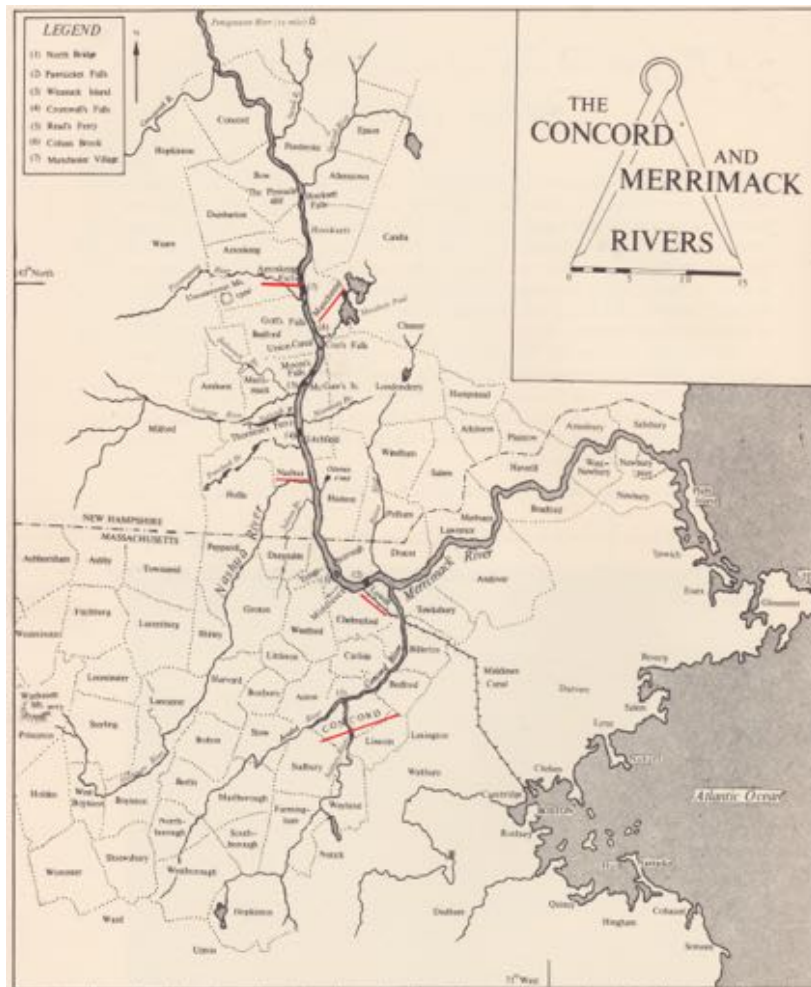
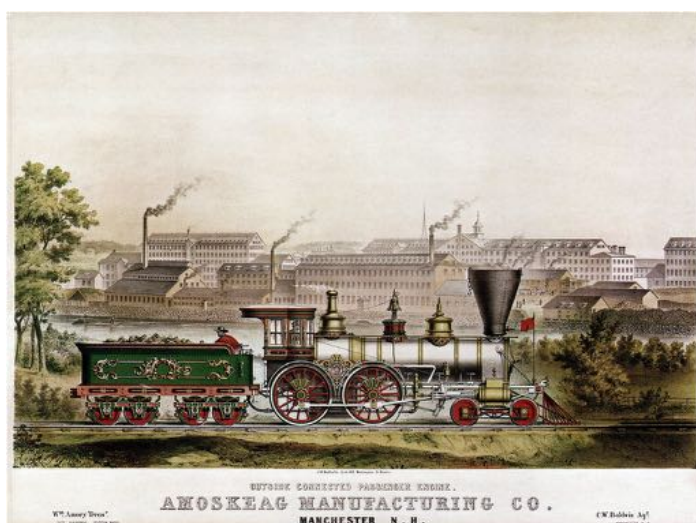


Figure 16: Concord and Merrimack Rivers. Henry David Thoreau's journey, prepared for Robert F. Stowell A Thoreau Gazetteer, Princeton University Press 1970, page 4.

The Merrimack has been described as “the most noted water power river in the world. ... [providing] average mill capacities from some 1200 horse power for the great textile mills as Lowell, Lawrence and Manchester on the river itself, to some 30 horse power for the miscellany of small industrial establishments located on minor tributaries.”<sup>17</sup> This distribution established a geographical basis for community.

That geographic basis, for the industrialization of New England in terms of its watersheds, was indexed to the railroad development in three dimensions: freight, passengers, and mail. Postal policy prevailed for passengers and mail for the development of class and schedule of service.



*Figure 17: Amoskeag Manufacturing Company. J. H. Bufford's lithographed print of the factory on the Merrimack River. The railroad locomotives that they produced in great quantities in the 1850s and 1860s were tested on the line of the Concord, Nashua and Lowell. [The Jay T. Last Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California]*

Feldman's book belongs to this story. It is organized geographically by state, the contract mails occupying pages 55-892; followed by a “Gazetteer” (pages 1893-1055) of post office names, providing also their modern name but original county of location and a page reference to the first-contracted railroad mail; followed by an indexing (pages 1056 to 1068) of the contracted railroads to the page references for their route numbers. The seven chapters of introductory material (pages 1-55) include an important section on the payment for railroad contracts which especially cites the 1845 law. The account is especially enlightened by the inclusion of mail messengers as well as station agents and route agents among the postal personnel immediately attending to the railroad mails. On page 28 of the chapter “Route Agents and Mail Messengers” there is further a printed government tabulation disclosing that in addition to 474 route agents and 1649 mail messengers in 1860 “a total of 68 baggage masters took responsibility for the mails on routes where a route agent was not employed.”

Feldman's text, in the main, is almost entirely assembled from material gathered from printed government documents, laced with quoted abstractions from the manuscript postal route registers. (Appendix B pages 1071-1072 indexes these volumes by state to ease future research at NARA.) For example:

“1842 July 12. James N. Alden is reappointed mail agent over this route and 1038 and is attached to the Utica offices. He is also made mail messenger with the other agents, and is to carry the US Express mail under the supervision of E. Irvine Humphrey.”

“1850 Oct 14. Permit contractors to change to 4 horse coaches on the plank road, said service being equally as good as the present service by one horse Railroad Car.”

“1861 Jan 19. Hackensack to be supplied each way twice daily except Sunday and Fort Lee three times a week, and all messenger services for the supply of the side offices to be at the expense of the said Company.”

Each railroad entry is augmented by maps, printed timetables, and station lists. Reproductions of covers in the printed text illustrate route agent handstamps identified according to Towle. An accompanying disk provides high resolution scans of 840 other covers, along with complete PMG reports for the period, and complete contract reports. (Feldman especially thanks two of our Society members, Jim Baird and Michael O'Reilly for help in locating such copies for reproduction.) Altogether, in addition to gathering the most primary of primary sources, Feldman has made it extremely easy to do research within his volume.

Now, with Feldman at hand, a railroad mail postal history opens upon the geographical circumstances of daily life, enlivening local postal history.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Stanley M. Bierman, M.D., *More of the World's Greatest Stamp Collectors*, Linn's Stamp News 1990. "Dr. Carroll Chase, Father of Scientific Philately." Page 50.

<sup>2</sup> [Robert Dalton Harris] "Delf Norona" *P.S. a quarterly journal of postal history*, whole number 18, August 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Delf Norona, *The American Philatelist* September 1928, page 819.

<sup>4</sup> *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History Volume 1 Articles 1 to 16 Published Under Supervision of the Handbook Committee of the American Philatelic Society, Inc. Edited and Published by Delf Norona*, Moundsville, W.Va. 1933. Article 3 "Railroad Postmarks (1838 to 1861)" by Carroll Chase, Page 18 of 18 pages.

<sup>5</sup> *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History Volume 2 Articles 17 to 33 Published Under Supervision of the Handbook Committee of the American Philatelic Society, Inc. Edited and Published by Delf Norona*, New Martinsville, W.Va., 1935, Article 31, "Distribution of Mail by Railroads in New England (to 1882)".

<sup>6</sup> C.W. Remele, *United States Railroad Postmarks 1837 to 1861*, The American Philatelic Society 1958. Page 3.

<sup>7</sup> 3c. '51-'57 *Chronicle*, issue 6, December 5, 1949/issue 12, December 10, 1951, publication of Unit No. 11 of the American Philatelic Society.

<sup>8</sup> Remele, op cit.

<sup>9</sup> Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks*, Mobile Post Office Society, Tucson AZ 1986

<sup>10</sup> Towle, page 317 through 367, "A Listing of Post Office Dept. route Agents Employed on Railroad Cars and Steamboats, Original Research by John Kay."

<sup>11</sup> Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris, "Modeling Postal History with Postal Numbers" in *Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately* Akron OH 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks Historical Supplement*, *Railway Historical Notes*, 1986.

<sup>13</sup> Towle, page XLIX, see footnote 9.

<sup>14</sup> Alvin F. Allow, *Steelways of New England*, NY 1946, pages 286-8.

<sup>15</sup> Edward Chase Kirkland, *Men, Cities and Transportation, A Study in New England History 1820-1900*, Harvard University Press 1948, page 62 ff. Also: Martha & Murray Zimiles, *Early American Mills*, New York 1973, page 166 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Henry D. Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, with an introduction by John McPhee, Princeton University Press 1980, pages 79 to 187.

<sup>17</sup> Louis C. Hunter, *A History of Industrial Power in the United States, 1780-1930*, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1979, pages 182, 186, 194-5.



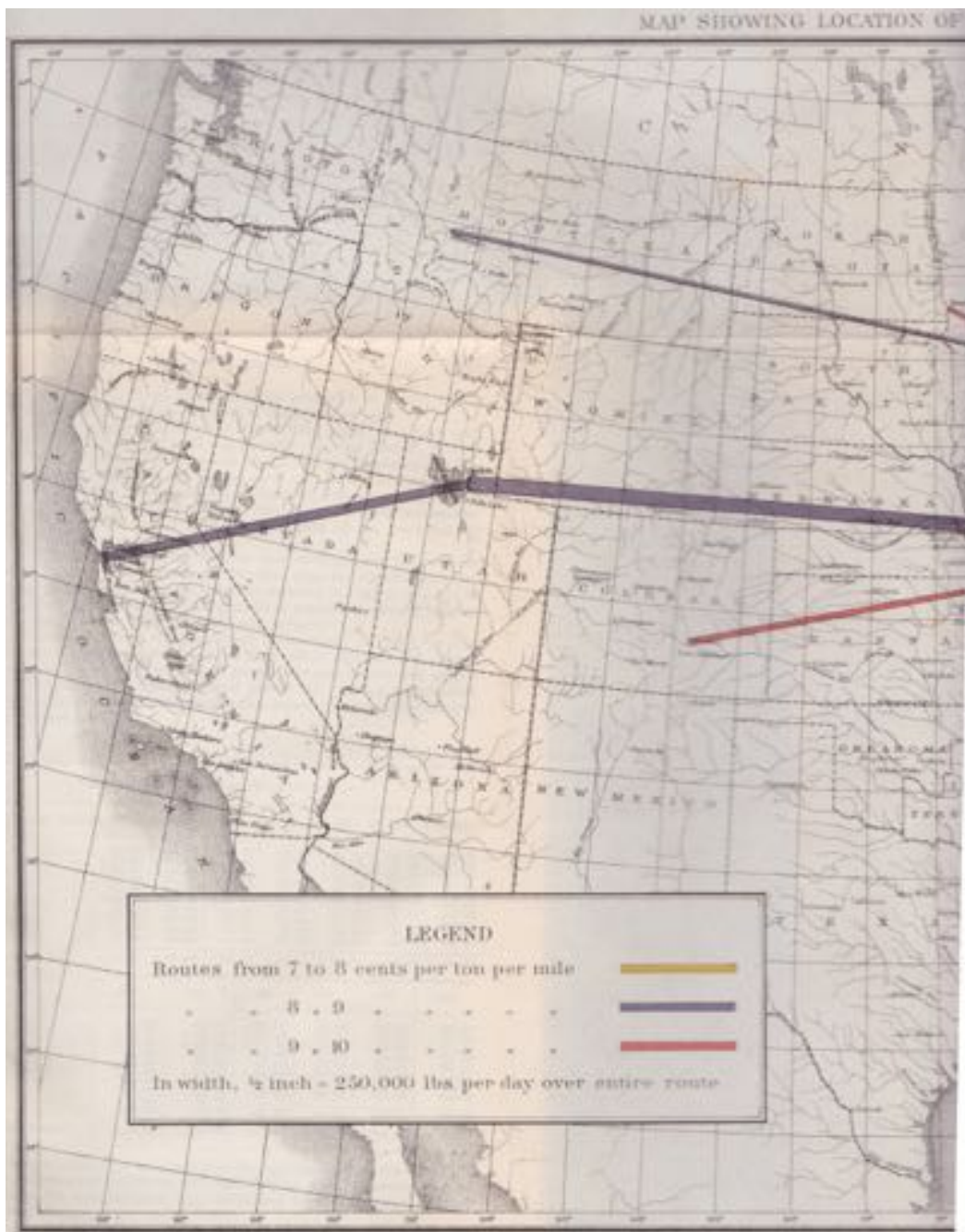
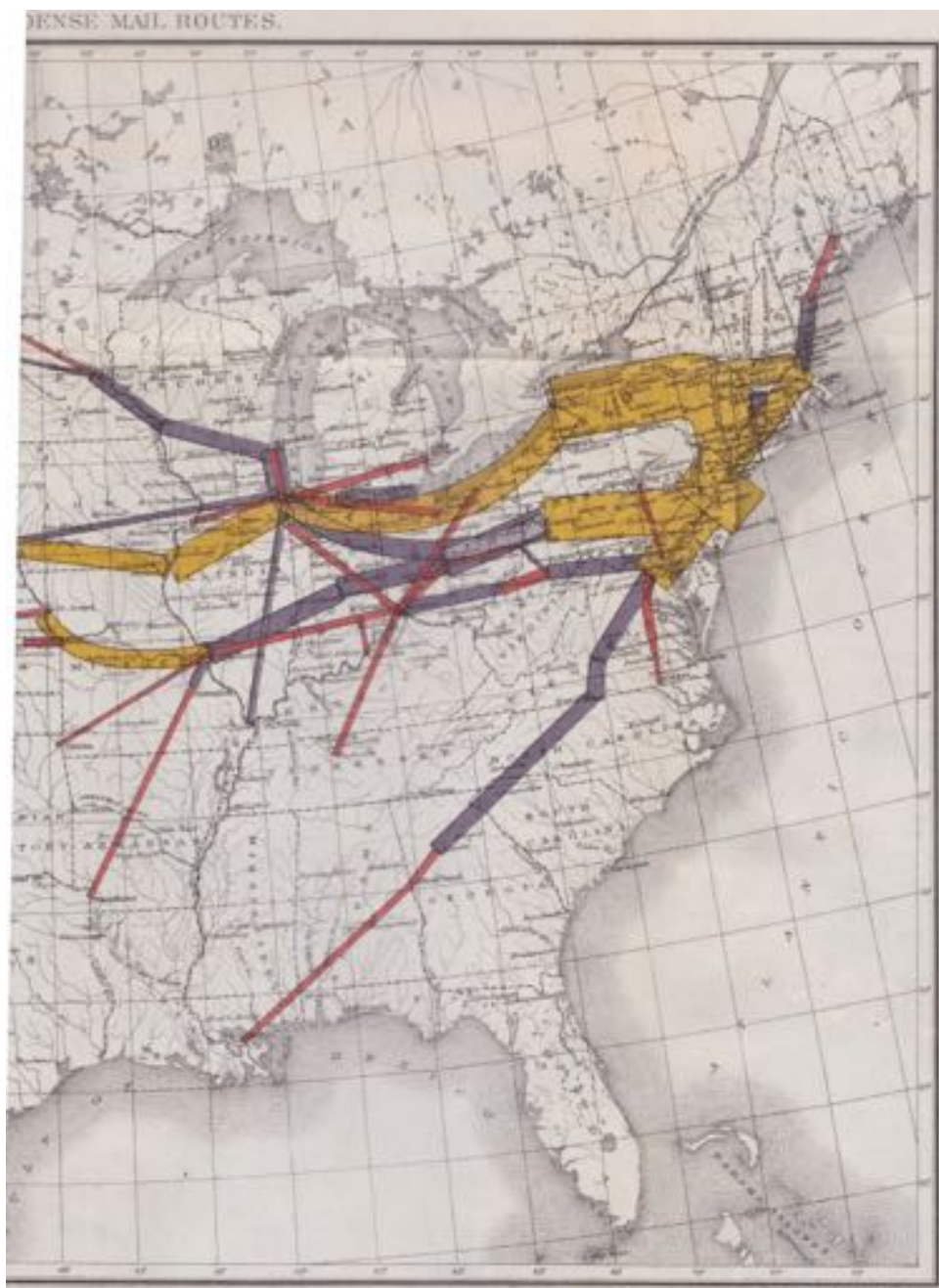


Figure 18 "The Principle that Density of Traffic Enables Economies. This is the third of the fundamental principles by which judgment is guided in the matter of railway mail compensation. It adds to the commercial principle of compensation and the governmental principle of public utility, a fact of special significance in the industry of transportation. This fact is what is known as the business law of transportation, a law which asserts that the cost per unit of transportation decreases as the density of traffic





*increases. Expressed in another manner, this law is that operating expenses do not grow proportionally with an increase in traffic." A Special Report on Railway Mail Pay, Ann Arbor, February 1, 1900, Henry C. Adams, pages 175 to 243 of Senate Document 89 Part 2, 56th Congress 2nd Session, Testimony taken by the Commission to Investigate the Postal Service, Washington GPO 1901, page 198. Fold-out map.*

# Roessler's First Day Cachets of 1932: Refused & Censored

by Barry Newton

Although air mail and first-day covers were his bread and butter, covers made by A.C. Roessler (often known as A.C. Roe, East Orange, New Jersey) are seen in a remarkably wide variety of early 20th century cover collections. In September and October, 1932, three of A.C. Roessler's First Day Cover cachets were subjected to a variety of censorship by layers of gummed labels or by covers being refused First Day cancellations. Four different cities returned unpostmarked covers with Post Office Department letters calling Roessler's cachets "fac-similie," "unmailable" or "contravening Postal Laws and Regulations." An October 1932 USPO Department of Classification memo and a series of 1930 reports by US Postal Inspectors show both the post office and Roessler in some of their most contentious moments, and help tell the story behind these covers.

The basics of this story are catalogued in Planty (1977-84) Newton (1976/7) in numerous articles in *First Days* and most recently in the *American Philatelist* (Youngblood, 2017).

Over the decades since I first took an interest in Roessler, I've had a particular fascination for these covers. With the help of many FDC collectors over the past 45 years, I have compiled a census of over 250 such covers, examined for censorship types. Most "censorship" is visible when held to normal light, but verification has also been done by black light examination to reveal any gum residue from removed censorship labels. Tables I and II and Figures 1 to 13 show the chaotic results.

This whole story starts with Roessler's cachets for the 8-cent Winged Globe air mail released on September 26, 1932. When the USPOD announced this stamp, they noted that all FDCs would be postmarked at the Ben Franklin Station in Washington, DC (PO Archives, 1932). A green rubberstamped cachet applied to most FDCs noted that the first day of the stamp was the ground breaking for the new PO building and the 132nd anniversary of the first Postmaster General appointed by George Washington.

Armed with this information, Roessler



Figure 1.

came up with his own stamp design honoring Ben Franklin, appointed the first Postmaster of the Colonies by the Continental Congress in 1775. In August, 1932, Roessler printed this perforated stamp-like cachet in the upper left of his SS *Manhattan* maiden voyage cachet, much like a postage stamp (Figure 1). When describing this Franklin cachet in ACRSN 199, Roessler repeated an often made boast, that he had made a better stamp design than the PO. Under his Franklin cachet, Roessler wrote, “There is a certain pride in suggesting designs. Imagine flipping the page of your album to the non-philatelist and casually saying, Yes, here’s a design I furnished the post office department.”



Figure 2.



Figure 3.



Figure 4.

In September, 1932, Roessler’s Ben Franklin design appeared on his FDC cachet for the new air issue, with a simple boxed design above and the stamp-like 8c “Use Air Mail” Ben Franklin cachet below. Only a few of these original double cachets ever made it to collector’s hands (Figure 2). The more usual Roessler cachet has only the boxed cachet at the top (Figure 3). Most of original 8c Franklin cachets were refused First Day Postmarks, with only one now known to have been returned to a collector, nearly five months after the September 26, 1932 first day of issue (Figures 4 and 5).

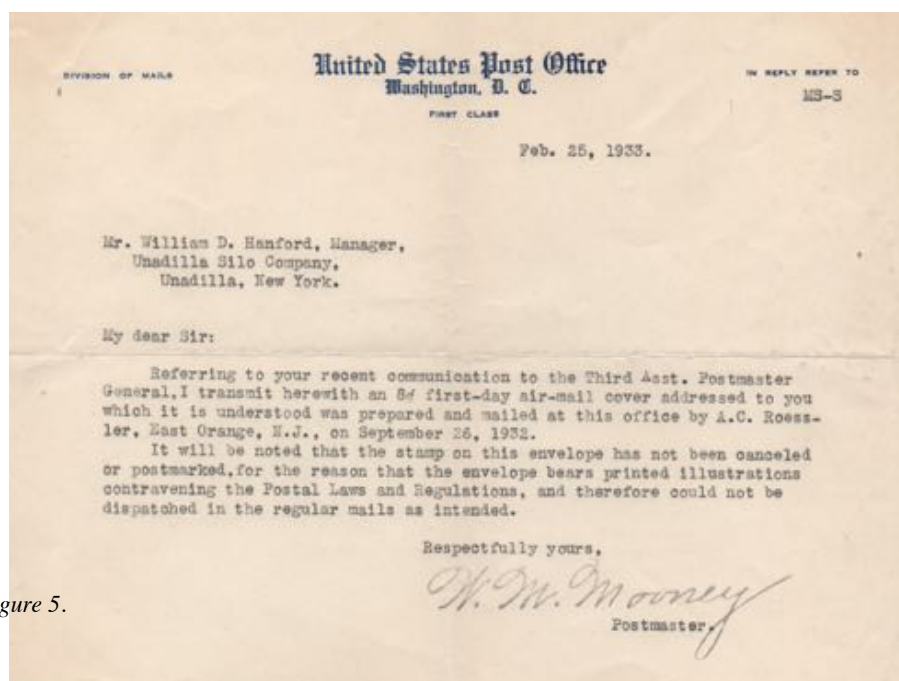


Figure 5.

Within two weeks of the premier of the 8c air stamp in Washington, DC, an October 11 Memo was written to the Division of Classification, the enforcement agency for Post Office Regulations, in Washington, DC. The memo noted covers and remissions received from Roessler and others and instructions to return “such covers as unmailable.”

“Mr. Anderson, of the Division of Equipment and Supplies, who was in Hanover, N.H, recently, has brought to our attention certain first-day covers for Daniel Webster commemorative stamps, which were furnished by A. C. Roessler, East Orange, N.J. Mr. Anderson states that instructions have been issued to the Postmaster at Hanover to refuse acceptance of such envelopes. A large number of covers and remittances had been received and already opened by the Postmaster at Hanover previous to your instructions, and many of these envelopes are hand addressed to individuals throughout the country and it can not be determined by the Postmaster by whom the packages of covers were submitted. Whether they were submitted by Mr. Roessler, or by the individual addressees is unknown.

It is, therefore, assumed that you will desire to further advise this Postmaster to return such covers to the addressees, with a 3c stamp inclosed (sic) and the cover stamped unmailable. It is also assumed that the same instructions were issued by you to the Postmasters at Exeter and Franklin, N.H., where the Daniel Webster stamps will also be sold on the first day, and that these Postmasters should be further advised on the subject.

I am also including a letter just received from Mr. D. J. Olney, Syrasuse, N.Y., submitted a sample cover for first day sale of the William Penn commemorative stamps, with inquiry as to its mailablilty. This is a fair reproduction of the William Penn stamp. These commemorative stamps will be first placed on sale at the post offices in Philadelphia and Chester, Pa, and New Castle, Del., on October 24, 1932.”



**Table I: Penn Censorship Types (from FDCs studied by author)**

X= None known; (1 time) & (2 times) = censored once or twice

Note: an area of black light irradiation indicates the presence of gum residue where a cachet censorship label has been removed.

Type	Description of Cachet Censorship	Chester	New Castle	Phila.	Phila. Refused
1	Orig. Cachet uncensored	3 to 5	Over 10	2	6 to 10
2	Orig. Cachet on air env. uncensored	X	1	X	X
3	Orig. Cachet censored by plain white strip placed diagonally across the cachet (1 time)	3 to 5	X	X	X
4	Orig. cachet censored by Revised Cachet label (1 time)	X	2	X	X
5	Orig. cachet censored completely by plain label (1 time)	2	6 to 10	X	2
6	Orig. cachet censored by Revised Cachet label, then censored again with "3Cents3" covered by plain strip (2 times)	Over 10	X	X	X
xxx	2x covered by brown tape	2			
7	Orig. cachet censored by Revised Cachet label then censored again with "3Cents3" covered by plain strip, on air env. (2 times)	X	1	1	X
8	Orig. cachet censored by Revised Cachet label then censored again completely by plain label (2 times)	Over 10	X	X	X
9	Orig. cachet censored by Revised Cachet label then censored again completely by plain label, on air envelope (2 times)	3 to 5	X	X	X
10	Revised Cachet on envelope, uncensored	X	6 to 10	X	2
11	Revised Cachet on envelope, censored with "3Cents3" covered by plain strip (1 time)	3 to 5	Over 10	X	1
12	Revised Cachet on envelope, uncensored completely by plain label (1 time)	Over 10	1	X	
13	Collector Made "Odd Ball"	3 Types	1 Type	X	X
14	Postmark refused by PO	2	X	X	Over 10
15	Censorship removed	1 (on air env.)	6 to 10 (all air env.)	X	X



**Table II: Webster Censorship Types (from FDCs studied by author)**

Type	Exeter	Franklin	Hanover
1 Orig. Cachet, uncensored	3 to 5	X	2
2 Orig. Cachet, censored by Revised Cachet label (1 time)	Over 10	6 to 10	1
3 Original Cachet, censored by Revised Cachet label, on air envelope (1 time)	Over 10	Over 10	X
4 Original Cachet, censored by plain label, perfs only show (1 time)	3 to 5	X	2
5 Original Cachet, censored by plain label, perfs only show, on air env. (1 time)	X	3 to 5	3 to 5
6 Original Cachet, censored by brown paper tape (1 time)	X	Over 10	X
7 Original Cachet, censored by brown paper tape, on air envelope (1 time)	X	1	X
8 Original Cachet, censored by Revised Cachet label, censored again with "3Cents3" covered by plain strip (2 times)	6 to 10	X	2
9 Original Cachet, censored by Revised Cachet label, censored again with "3Cents3" covered by plain strip, on air envelope (2 times)	X	X	1
10 Original Cachet, censored by Revised Cachet label, then censored again completely by plain label (2times)	X	X	2
11 Original Cachet, censored by Revised Cachet label, then censored again completely by plain label, on air envelope (2 times)	X	X	3 to 5
12 Original Cachet, censored by plain label with perfs only showing, censored again by plain label (2 times)	3 to 5	X	2
13 Original Cachet, censored by plain label with perfs only showing, censored again by plain label, on air envelope (2 times)	3 to 5	X	3 to 5
14 Revised Cachet on envelope	3 to 5	2	1
15 Revised Cachet on envelope, completely censored by plain label (1 time)	X	X	2
16 Collector Made "Odd Ball"	1 Type	3 Types	1 Type
17 Postmark refused by PO	X	X	3 to 5
18 Censorship removed	6 to 10	6 to 10	None



Figure 6.



Figure 7.



Figure 8.

Figure 9.



As with the 8c Franklin Air cachet in September, Roessler's Webster and Penn cachets could never be confused with the new stamp designs (Figure 6 and 7). In response to the Department of Classification memo, Roessler prepared revised cachet designs, both printed on envelopes and on gummed labels (Figure 8).

Roessler also supplied plain unprinted gummed labels in narrow strips measuring about 1 x 2 3/8 inches, used to cover the denominations of Roessler's designs. Figure 9 shows a revised Penn cachet with this small label removed, with a gap in the Old Court House cachet applied to many New Castle Penn FDCs. These labels (and, in a few cas-

es, brown tape used on registered packages of the period (Figures 10 and 11), were all used to censor Roessler's original cachets. Sometimes two labels were applied to a cover before the first-day PO postmarked the cover. With great diligence, this Webster cachet (Figure 12) was first censored leaving just the perforations of the cachet design showing, then censored again to cover the perfs.



Top to bottom: Figures 10, 11, 12.

FDCs, postmarked in error on this censored Penn Cachet, all addressed to New Jersey collectors. Not a stranger to conflict with the US-POD, Roessler was prepared to deal these problems. Two April, 1930 reports from Post Office Inspector's Case 214274-C show the bluster and subterfuge that is so often associated with Roessler (Newton, 1996).

An April 7, 1930 report by T.H. Jervey noted past efforts by Roessler to "obtain more than his allotted share of first day covers of the commemorative stamps," the Charleston South Carolina commemorative. An April 14 report by another inspector, A.J. Knight, went on to report:



Figure 13.

"Several parties had already tried to secure more than 25 covers, and among them was A. C. Roessler, who had under his own name ordered the usual number (25) and had at the same time, employed Mrs. H. H. Cochran 23 Gadsen Street, to purchase for him 150 covers. On the 9<sup>th</sup> Mrs., Cochran received another order from Mr. Roessler for approximately the same number of covers, and some of the envelopes, between 5 and 10, bore the address of Mr. Roessler and the name of "A. C. Roe. Other envelopes were, undoubtedly, addressed to fictitious names."

Prior to the receipt of the second order by Mrs. Cochran, I had advised Mr. Cochran, who is bookkeep of the Charleston postoffice, that Mrs. Cochran would not be permitted to fill the orders from Mr. Roessler where upon he wired Mr. Roessler to that effect and receive in reply statement that the matter was being taken up with the Third Assistant and that failure to fill the order would cause "loss of thousands of dollars."

This loss is impossible to imagine, selling FDCs for just pennies over the face value of the stamps.

In spite of the best efforts of Roessler and his agents, as with the earlier 8c air issue in September some Webster and Penn FDCs were returned to collectors without postmarks. A small number of unpostmarked, refused FDCs are known on the Webster issue found with the message "THIS ENVELOPE DECLARED UNMAILABLE BY THE POST OFFICE DEPT." on a strip of paper folded around the cover. The example shown here (Figures 14 and 15) has this message with an Exeter FDC, the revised cachet label pasted over the original cachet (Table II, Type 2). Although the city is not specified, the best indication is that these came from Hanover is the lower number of Hanover FDCs known to me (Table II).

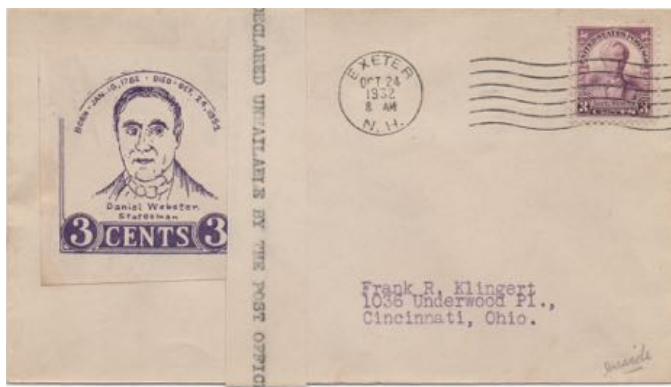


Figure 14.

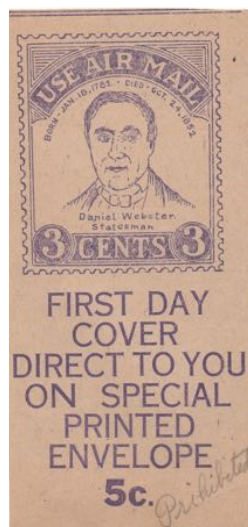


Figure 15.

When Mr. Kilgert recieved his FDCs, he apparently chose to save the Hanover PO message with his Exeter FDC, placing the ad for the "Prohibited" cachets inside that FDC.



Figure 16.

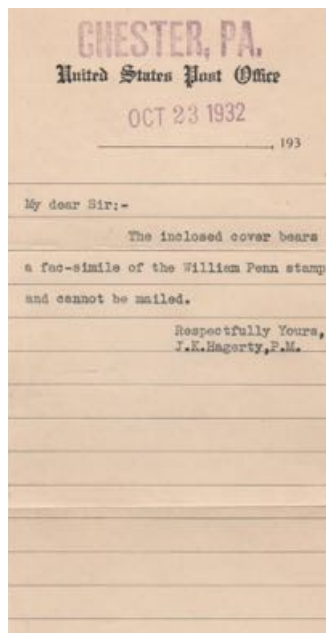


Figure 17.

The cover shown in Figure 16 has a label with a revised Roessler cachet design pasted on an uncacheted Roessler air envelope. I have seen two covers refused at Chester, Pennsylvania, both with this short note enclosed (Figure 17). This particular FDC was serviced by Egon Bernet, with his rubberstamped address on the back of the cover. To save a penny here and there, Bernet used just the free revised-cacheted gummed label supplied by Roessler for this refused FDC. Several other examples of Bernet-made FDCs with revised labels *not* covering an original cachet design are known.

Roessler-refused Penn FDCs from Philadelphia are the best known of the four refused cities. They were first discussed by Monte Eiserman (1968). A short letter from the Philadelphia Office of the Postmaster, dated January 12, 1932 began,

My dear Patron,

There is transmitted herewith cover addressed to you bearing the new William Penn stamp which was sent to this office for postmark of October 24, 1932, the first day of issue.

Due to the cover bearing a design similar to the stamp, the Post Office Department ruled them unmailable, therefore they cannot be postmarked and go through the mail, and this office is taking the next possible way of supplying you with this stamp.

Respectfully yours,

John J Mack, Postmaster.

A few examples of these letters were saved with the penalty envelopes used to return unpostmarked FDCs (Figures 18 and 19). The letter was year-dated 1932 in error, but not mailed until January 11, 1933. Roessler cachets were returned by the Philadelphia PO with a number of censorship varieties. In spite of their best efforts, a few FDCs are known with Philadelphia postmarks (Table I).

There is one more chapter to the First Day in Philadelphia, due to the luck and industry of a New Jersey collector. The basics of the entire censorship story on the Penn issue are played out on a set of three FDCs serviced by a Roessler customer, Dick





Figure 18.

Figure 19.

Dahlem. Former AFDCS President George Comes got this set and the story behind it from Dahlem, AFDCS Charter Member 70.

Dahlem apparently bought a few of Roessler's Penn cachets and submitted them for first-day postmarks. He applied his own large rubberstamped address. No refused Roessler cachet are known from New Castle. Dahlem's FDC from New Castle was received as postmarked, as expected from all Roessler New Castle FDCs known at this time (Figure 20).

Dahlem's Chester and Philadelphia FDCs were not. Apparently Dahlem was among the collectors who had his FDCs returned without postmarks.

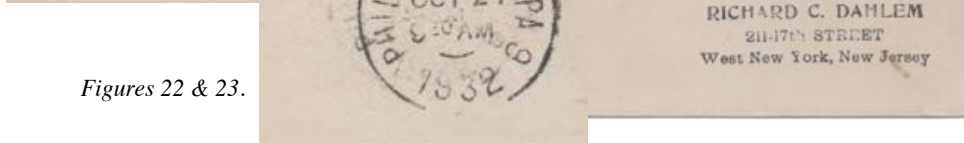


Figure 20.

Dahlem sent new self-addressed uncached envelopes to both Chester and Philadelphia. with a second request for postmarked FDC for his collection. The Chester PO obliged with a FD cancel and the local Chamber of Commerce cachet (Figure 21). The Philadelphia PO postmarked his cover with a Red Cross slogan that was originally not dated October 24 (Figure 22). He returned the Philadelphia to the PO, saying he still wanted his FDC. The results are shown in Figure 23. The Philadelphia PO apparently scuffed and erased the dated town dial on the cover with the Red Cross slogan. They actually set up a machine, without any killer bars, to give Dehlem the October 24 postmark he wanted.



Figure 21.



Figures 22 & 23.

On a card he mounted in FDC album, Dahlem wrote: “Philadelphia was (sic) used current date with Red Cross slogan (November). Then P.O. erased the Nov cancel and used the correct first day date. The only 1<sup>st</sup> day dated with slogan.”



Figure 24.

Roessler’s partingshot to the USPOD was another revised cachet variety (Figure 24). ACR added the last four lines of text, not seen on most of ACR’s Oglethorpe cachets, “Put this cover in your collection as a souvenir of a

passing administration that was not friendly to stamp collectors.” A little over a week later, the refused cover with the 8c air stamp issued on September 26, 1932, was returned, after being held nearly five months by the Washington, DC post office until February 25, 1933 (Figures 4 and 5).

A final note. There is no evidence that Roessler’s Webster and Penn FDCs were held by the PO before dispatched to collectors. Roessler’s censored cachets received a wide variety of backstamps and transit cancels (Figure 25). Several of Roessler’s FDC subscribers got favor cancels on all of their censored FDCs. Favor backstamps from

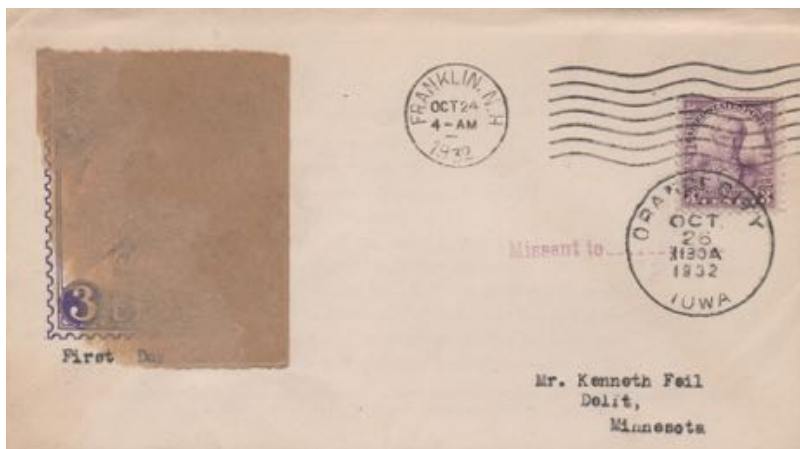


Figure 25.

Scottdale, Pa. on October 24 and 25, and Dayton, Ohio, most on October 24, plus one October 27, are seen on about ten FDCs. Additional backstamps dated October 24 through 27 are known from Florida, Iowa, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Minnesota, Boston & N.Y. RPO, La Cross & Preston RPO, N.Y. & Wash. RPO, plus a few October 28 to 31 stragglers from New York, Wisconsin and Sandy Point, Newfoundland. This list includes postmarks found on both Webster and Penn FDCs.



Figures 26 & 27.

Perhaps an even bigger mystery than why did the cachet censorship happen at all, is why did it happen when it did in late 1932? Roessler made about 10 similar hand drawn cachet designs between October, 1926 and April, 1932, plus occasional similar designs during 1933-38.

The timing of these Roessler censored cachets can probably be best put in context by more serious problems Roessler was having with the Post Office during this period. The *New York Times* reported that Roessler was arrested in his home on January 31, 1933. He was indicted by a federal grand jury for fraudulent use of the mails for using a facsimile New York cancellation on Wilkins submarine covers, and was probably under greater scrutiny by the USPOD in late 1932.

The July 15, 1933 issue of *Linn's* reported that Roessler pled guilty to two counts, fraudulent use of the mails and printing a forged US postmark. The cover and postmark referred to here is the May 8, 1931 Wilkins covers shown in Figure 26. A legitimate May 8, 1931 postmark on another Wilkins cover is shown in Figure 27.

While it is impossible to exactly date Roessler's publications, the four pages of the outside covers offer the best clues as to dates. Only a few issues can be dated to 1933. For the *Air Plane Stamp News*, whole number 147 features a "No Profit Sale" on the front cover, and the front cover number 148 says Welcome 1933-34: "Vacation over, School Started . . . We kept going all summer reduced speed and now we are all set to go at our usual pace." The copy of *A.C. Roessler's Stamp News* 200 from the American Philatelic Research Library as a front cover, rubberstamped docket of Feb 12, 1933 and front cover of ACRSN 201 is the Christmas/New Year issue of 1933-1934.

When I compiled the *A.C. Roessler Photo Cachet Catalogue* in the 1970s, I included many of Roessler's advertisements from his publications. For 20 years from 1918 to 1938, Roessler produced 167 issues of *Air Plane Stamp News*. For 28 years from 1909 to 1938, he made 208 issues of *A.C. Roessler's Stamp News*. During the years before 1933, Roessler published an average of about 9.5 issues per year. From 1933 until he went out of business in 1938, he published about 5 issues per year.

Although the exact chronology of publication is not clear, Roessler's 1933 arrest and conviction definitely put a crimp in his business that he never really recovered from.

This research has been a collaborative effort of many FDC collectors who have corresponded with me over the years. Many are listed in the acknowledgements on page one of the *AC Roessler Photo Cachet Catalogue* that I compiled in the 1970s. Of special note are George Comnes, who knew Dick Dalhem and recorded the story of the "erased" Philadelphia FDC cancels, and David Whitesell, who located the April 1930 and October 1932 PO documents reported here, on one of his many philatelic research trips to Washington, DC.

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**Barry Newton** worked as a First Day Cover dealer and was, as well, the third editor of First Days, the journal of the American First Day Cover Society. He and the authors won the American Philatelic Congress Boehret award for First Days magazine in 2000. He was the editor of the *Planty Photo Encyclopedia of US Cacheted FDCs* and the author of specialized cachet catalogs about A.C. Roessler and W.M. Grandy.

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# American Postal History in Other Journals

by Ken Grant

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Many articles on U.S. postal history are published each month. In order to present a useful survey of recent publications, we adopt a rather narrow definition of postal history and present what is more an index than a literary endeavor. Unlike an index, however the present listing contains very little cross-referencing; so that a reader interested in trans-Atlantic mail should check each geographical location from which such mail might have originated. Editors not finding their publication reviewed here need only make sure the publication is available to the U.S. Associate Editor, Ken Grant at E11960 Kessler Rd., Baraboo WI 53913.

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## General Topics

### Air Mail

Charles Wood points out Charles Lindbergh's Detroit connection (by birth) and illustrates a cover commemorating a visit in 1927 in "Charles A. Lindbergh, Ninety Years Ago." *Peninsular Phil.* 59 No. 2 (Summer 2017).

A 1928 first flight between Bay City, Michigan and Chicago is the subject of Jerome C. Jarnick's article "C.A.M. 27 Chicago – Bay City." *Peninsular Phil.* 59 No. 2 (Summer 2017).

"Lakehurst Mail on Zeppelin Hindenburg" by Cheryl R. Ganz looks at mail carried by the Hindenburg that had been mailed to the Lakehurst post office rather than New York which was the exchange office that should have handled the dispatch. *NJPH* 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

### Auxiliary Markings

John M. Hotchner illustrates a number of auxiliary markings in his article "Unusual Markings on, and Odd Handling of, Incoming Covers from Abroad." *La Posta* 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

Steve Swain reports a pointing finger (with band aid?) in "Auxiliary Markings on George Covers – NO RECORD ATLANTA ORDINANCE DEPOT." *Ga. Post Roads* 25 No. 3 (Summer 2017).

"A Morbid 1938 National Air Mail Week Cachet" by Steve Swain discusses an Air Mail Week cachet which shows a portion of the Grandview cemetery where 777 unknown victims of the Johnstown Flood of 1889 are buried. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 3 (August 2017).

In "Customs Duty Markings on Incoming Covers," John M. Hotchner looks at incoming mail subject to the customs review process and incurring service fees and auxiliary markings. *La Posta* 48 No. 2 (Second Quarter).

A 1920 cover mailed from New York City and addressed to Berlin, Germany carries a "Via Fast Boat" auxiliary marking in Kevin G. Lowther's article, "'Via Fast Boat' – an Elusive Private Marking." *US Spec.* 88 No. 9 (September 2017).

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## **Civil War**

Deane R. Briggs provides background on a “‘colored troops’ endorsed cover from Florida in his article “Another U.S. Colored Troops Cover.” The cover was sent by Woodbury Comstock Smith to his wife. Smith served in Company H of the Massachusetts 34th Infantry Regiment. *Flor. Post. Hist. Jour.* 24 No. 2 (May 2017).

“Indian Territorial Postal Usages in the Confederacy” by James W. Milgram looks at the Confederate mail routes and the 28 post offices operating at the beginning of the Civil War. *Flor. Post. Hist. Jour.* 24 No. 2 (May 2017).

“Florida’s Important Civil War Battles Part I: The Battle of Olustee” by Thomas Lera and Deane R. Briggs focuses on a strategic railroad line and the battle which took place in February, 1864. *Flor. Post. Hist. Jour.* 24 No. 2 (May 2017).

Patricia A. Kaufmann looks at an 1864 cover carrying a manuscript “By Flag of Truce” marking in her article, “Breaking the Rules: A Civilian Flag of Truce Cover.” By rule, the cover should have been sent to the Dead Letter Office. *La Posta* 48 No. 2 (Second Quarter).

Richard Maisel’s “American Civil War Blockade Letters (1861-65): Numbers Delivered to the South and Their Survival Rates” attempts to estimate the total number of Blockade letters as well as their ports of departure, whether Nassau, Bermuda, Halifax, Great Britain, Havana, or the Bahamas. *Collect. Club Phil.* 96 No. 5 (September-October 2017).

Patricia A. Kaufmann researches the use of a Virginia mill as a Confederate Prisoner of War Camp in her article, “‘It Has to be True: I Saw It on the Internet.’ The Warwick & Barksdale Mill ‘Confederate Prison.’” *La Posta* 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

Richard F. Winter in his article, “The 58th North Carolina Troops in Eastern Tennessee,” provides context on that unit’s operations in Tennessee as well as two Confederate covers sent to Greensborough, NC. *N.C. Post Hist.* 36 No. 3 (Summer 2017).

### **Highway and Railroad Post Offices**

William Keller continues his research report on the Louisville, Kentucky and St. Louis Missouri HPO in “Louisville, Kentucky and St. Louis, Missouri HPO MPOS #122.” He includes schedules of service as well as a selection of cancels. *Trans. Post. Coll.* 68 No. 3 (March-April 2017).

Douglas N. Clark continues his series entitled “Unlisted Railroad Postmarks” illustrating cancels and covers not listed in the U. S. Transit Markings Catalog or the U. S. R.P.O. Catalog. *Trans. Post. Coll.* 68 No. 3 (March-April 2017).

### **Post Offices**

Steve Bahnsen illustrates 13 contemporary post offices in Hawaii. *La Posta* 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

“Postoffices from the Past” illustrates six Vermont with picture post cards. *Vermont Phil.* 62 No. 2 (May 2017).

## **World War I**

Free frank cards provided by the Red Cross to soldiers to let families and loved ones know of their safe arrivals is the subject of Steve Swain’s “Coca-Cola Heir Arrives Safely Overseas.” *Ga. Post Roads* 25 No. 3 (Summer 2017).

“World War I: Postmarked Hoboken, N.J.” by Robert G. Rose recounts the history of Hoboken, N.J. as a port of embarkation for troops heading overseas during WWI. Rose illustrates a number of “safe arrival” cards as well as the “Hoboken Eagle and Wavy Box cancel.” Collect. Club Phil. 96 No. 4 (July-August 2017).

### **Geographic Location**

#### **Florida**

Phil Eschbach provides a history of the post office in “Evinston, Florida 32633.” Chartered in 1882, the post office has been the operation of a single family for over 100 years. Flor. Post. Hist. Jour. 24 No. 2 (May 2017).

Levy County, Florida originally had 65 post offices, but only nine now remain open. “Central Levy County Ghost Town Post Offices: Lukens, Rosewood, Sumner & Wyllly” reviews the status of towns from Otter Creek along State Road 24 to the Gulf coast. Flor. Post. Hist. Jour. 24 No. 2 (May 2017).

Peter Martin presents the history of an unauthorized piece of Spanish-American war soldiers mail carrying a Virginia Philatelist return address mailed from Jacksonville, Florida to Richmond, Virginia. La Posta 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

#### **Georgia**

“‘Fake Town’ Spanish-American War Postal History” by Steve Swain focus on Camp Thomas located in Georgia and the post offices used to service that camp’s mail. La Posta 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

“Dr. H. H. Green: An Early ‘Junk Mailer’” by Francis J. Crown, Jr. provides background on Dr. Green’s use of the mails to sell his cure for dropsy, or what we currently refer to as edema. Ga. Post Roads 25 No. 3 (Summer 2017).

#### **Illinois**

Jack Hilbing and Stan Bednarczyk discuss the hoard of approximately 100,000 covers addressed to Michael Brand and Company and the United States Brewing Company in their article “The Story of the Brand Hoard: The People, Breweries, Coins and Covers.” La Posta 48 No. 2 (Second Quarter).

#### **Maine**

Steve Bahnsen provides photographs of eighteen Maine post offices in his contribution to post office history, “Maine Post Offices.” La Posta 48 No. 2 (Second Quarter).

#### **Michigan**

“Detroit YMCA Charity Label” by Cary E. Johnson looks a label affixed to mail dropped at the Detroit post office without stamps. A stamp was affixed and the addressee was invited to contribute to the YMCA in appreciation for this service. Peninsular Phil. 59 No. 2 (Summer 2017).

#### **New Jersey**

“World War I: Postmarked New Jersey” by Robert G. Rose presents a review of the postmarks found on mail from New Jersey U.S. Army camps and hospitals in World War I. NJPH 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

Don Bowe looks at two stampless covers carried along the Morris Canal in “Morris Canal Usage – A First?” The canal was in operation from 1825 to 1929. NJPH 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

Donald A. Chafetz presents the fourth installment of his study, “Mail Sent Abroad to and from Morris County Part 4: Tortola, British West Indies. Chafetz looks at three stampless covers addressed to Morris County from Tortola, BWI. NJPH 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

“Southard Notebooks: Friends in High Places” is an installment in the series of articles providing transcriptions of letters written by New Jersey senator Samuel L. Southard, now housed at the Princeton University archives. NJPH 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

#### **New Mexico**

“A Rare Cover Related to Pancho Villa, Columbus, N.M., and the Pershing Expedition” by Jim Mahrer discusses the unusual use of a Parcel Post Postage Due stamp on a piece of soldiers mail sent during John J. Pershing’s expedition to capture or kill Poncho Villa. La Posta 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

#### **New York**

A postcard featuring the Albany, New York Assembly Chamber at the State Capital is the subject of George McGowan’s “New York History on a Common Postcard.” The postcard mentions the flooding of the Hudson River which would eventually be controlled by the creation of the Sacandaga Reservoir. Bull. Emp. St. Post. Hist. Soc. 50 No. 1 (June 2017).

In his article, “Widening One’s Perspective,” Douglas Penwell interprets a variety of handstamps and markings on a cover leading him to observe that New York State postal history can involve other states, that great covers can be found in unexpected locations, and that postal history provides rewarding opportunities. Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. Whole No. 25 New Series (March 2017).

Surveys and polls taken using postal cards are the subject of Larry Laliberte’s “Polling in the 1918 New York Gubernatorial Primaries.” Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. Whole No. 25 New Series (March 2017).

A cover sent by a missionary thought to be sent from Bloomfield, Michigan to New York is the subject of Greg Stone and Bob Bramwell’s “A Bloomfield Surprise.” Based on transit time and the cover’s markings, Stone and Bramwell identified the cover’s mailing location as East Bloomfield, N.Y. Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. Whole No. 25 New Series (March 2017).

Charles J. DiComo interprets markings on a cover in “From the Grain Fields of Virginia to a Gin Distillery in Holland.” The circular New York datestamp on the cover the author identifies as Hubert C. Skinner’s NYDM 52-3. Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. Whole No. 25 New Series (March 2017).

An cover announcing that a paper had remained unclaimed at the Binghamton post office is the subject of David E. Williams’ “Post Office Business.” Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. Whole No. 25 New Series (March 2017).

Tom Mazza looks at a November 1771 cover that has been regarded as the earliest recorded penny post folded letter in “Penny Post in New York, An Update.” Mazza il-

illustrates another earlier cover from Philadelphia which predates the New York cover, showing a June 5, 1771 manuscript inscription. *Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. Whole No. 25 New Series* (March 2017).

### **North Carolina**

Tony L. Crumbley provides background information and shows selected covers from twenty-one women's colleges in his article, "Women's Colleges in North Carolina—A Postal History." *N.C. Post Hist.* 36 No. 3 (Summer 2017).

In "Galveston, North Carolina Post Office 1888-1902, Edward E. Cooke provides some postal history concerning his personal dwelling, the former Galveston, North Carolina post office and the property bought by his great grandmother. The history of the post office comprises a family history at that time. *N.C. Post Hist.* 36 No. 3 (Summer 2017).

### **Ohio**

A cover mailed to England from Oberlin, Ohio is the subject of Wayne Anmuth's "The Steel Blue Variety of the 24-Cent 1861 Issue. The 24-cent rate paid for carrying a letter from the United States to England. *La Posta* 48 No. 2 (Second Quarter).

### **Pennsylvania**

Gus Spector provides the fifth installment on his series of articles on Philadelphia hotel markings in "'Gone to the Dickens!': The United States Hotel." Spector explores the connection between the United States Hotel and Charles Dickens's visit to Philadelphia. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

"Leetonia, Tioga County, PA – A Pennsylvania Tannery Town," by Anita T. Sprankle discusses the industrial activity and postal history of Leetonia, including a list of the postmasters and dates of appointment. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

Glenn L. Blauch illustrates the first free frank cover he has seen from Lebanon, Pennsylvania in "1830 Lebanon, Pa. Postmaster Free Frank." The cover was endorsed by Postmaster Jacob Karch. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

Richard Colberg records two new Lebanon County markings, one an oval Lebanon and the other a Schaefferstown manuscript in his article "Lebanon County – Two New Finds." *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

Ronald J. Yeager provides a history of the village of Cerestown in his article "Cerestown, McKean County" using early covers of the stampless period. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 2 (May 2017).

"Seven Letters to Samuel B. Morris during the April 1816 Restored Rate Period" by Philip G. Russell looks at letters sent to Morris between March 31, 1816 to April 30, 1816. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 3 (August 2017).

Steve Swain's "The Girl I Left Behind Me" presents several Civil War patriotic covers that employ lyrics from a popular song of the period. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 3 (August 2017).

"2nd Update on Pennsylvania Manuscript Markings, Part XXIII" by Tom Mazza lists new listings for both Wayne and Westmoreland Counties. *Pa. Post. Hist.* 45 No. 3 (August 2017).



### South Dakota

Ken Stach focuses on Grant County in his article, "A Study of Grant County, South Dakota." Located in the northeastern portion of South Dakota, Grant County was organized in 1878. In addition to providing background on the post offices, Stach lists postmasters and their compensation at the various locations. *Dakota Coll.* 34 No. 3 (July 2017).

### Texas

"Reverend Professor Carl Friedrich Graebner: A Missouri Minister Down Under" by Jesse I. Spector and Robert L. Markovits presents background on a cover mailed from Dallas, Texas to Concordia College in South Australia. *La Posta* 48 No. 1 (First Quarter 2017).

Tom Koch presents "A Texas Postal History Look at Grapes," which illustrates transatlantic covers sent by Siegfried Boch, a early grape producer and Texas vintner. *Tex. Post. Hist. Soc. J.* 42 Np. 2 (May 2017).

"Crystal City's 'Other' Philatelic Story" by Charles Deaton provides background on the WW2 Crystal City Alien Detention Station where 2,271 Japanese, 997 Germans, and six Italians were interned. *Texas Post. Hist. Soc. J.* 42 No. 3 (August 2017).

"The Role of an Obscure Texas Politician with U.S. Diplomacy in Japan & Korea During 1945" by Ravi Vora focuses on a postcard mailed from APO 235 in Seoul, Korea to James F. Byrnes, then Secretary of State, by Maury Maverick, Sr. a former member of Congress. *Texas Post. Hist. Soc. J.* 42 No. 3 (August 2017).

### Vermont

Glenn A. Estus illustrates a Doane cancel with a 2 in the killer bars indicating a post office doing \$100 to \$200 worth of business in "A New Discovery: North Randolph Doane Cancel." *Vermont Phil.* 62 No. 2 (May 2017).

"The Post Horn: Stampless Folded Letters Without a Postmark" by Bill Lizotte illustrates some covers that did travel through the postal service but without manuscript postmarks indicating the town of origination. *Vermont Phil.* 62 No. 2 (May 2017).

Bill Lizotte presents a number of early Vermont handstamps applied to stampless covers in his article, "Stampless Handstamped Covers (1792-1830): Part I." *Vermont Phil.* 62 No. 2 (May 2017).

### Journal Abbreviations

Badger Post. Hist. = *Badger Postal History*, 1641 Bruce Ln., Green Bay WI 54313-5503.

Bull. Emp. St. Post. Hist. Soc. = *Bulletin of the Empire State Postal History Society*, Lawrence Laliberte, 15 Sunset Hill Ct., Carmel NY 10512-5027.

Collect. Club Phil. = *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, gene Fricks, 22 E. 35th St., New York NY 10016-3806.

Dakota Coll. = *Dakota Collector*, Gary Anderson, PO Box 600039, St. Paul MN 55106.

Excelsior! Empire St. Post. Hist. Soc. = *Excelsior! Empire State Postal History Society*, David E. Williams, 7115 Abbey Woods Dr. NE, New Salisbury IN 47161.

Flor. Post. Hist. Jour. = *Florida Postal History Journal*, Deane R. Briggs, 2000 N. Lake Eloise Dr., Winter Haven FL 33884.

Ga. Post Roads = *Georgia Post Roads*, Douglas N. Clark, PO Box 427, Marstons Mills MA 02648.

Ia. Post. Hist. Soc. Bull. = *Iowa Postal History Society Bulletin*, PO Box 1375, Dubuque IA 52004.

Ill. Post. Hist. = *Illinois Postal Historian*, 951 Rose Court, Santa Clara CA 95051.

La Posta = *La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History*, PO Box 6074, Fredericksburg VA 22403.

N.C. Post. Hist. = *North Carolina Postal Historian*, PO Box 681447, Charlotte NC 28216.

NJPH = *NJPH The Journal of New Jersey Postal History Society*, 18 Balbrook Dr., Mendham NJ 07945.

Oh. Post. Hist. J. = *Ohio Postal History Journal*, 568 Illinois Ct., Westerville OH 43081.

Okla. Phil. = *The Oklahoma Philatelist*, 4005 Driftwood Circle, Yukon OK 73099.

Pa. Post. Hist. = *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*, 382 Tall Meadow Ln., Yardley PA 19067.

Peninsular Phil. = *The Peninsular Philatelist*, 244 Breckenridge West, Ferndale MI 48220.

Prexie Era = *The Prexie Era*, 7554 Brooklyn Av, NE, Seattle WA 98115-1302.

Tenn. Posts = *Tennessee Posts*, PO Box 871, Shelton WA 98594.

Tex. Post. Hist. Soc. = *Texas Postal History Society Journal*, 1013 Springbrook Dr., DeSoto TX 75115.

Trans. Post. Coll. = *Transit Postmark Collector*, Douglas N. Clark, PO Box 427, Marstons Mills MA 02648.

US Spec. = *The United States Specialist*, 951 Rose Court, Santa Clara CA 95051.

Vermont Phil. = *The Vermont Philatelist*, PO Box 451, Westport NY 12993-0147.

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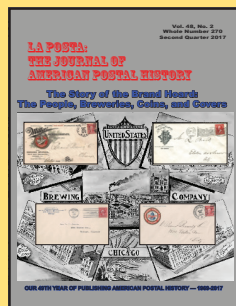
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# Foreign Postal History in Other Journals

by Daniel Piazza

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Copies of journals for review should be sent to the Associate Editor, Daniel Piazza, National Postal Museum, P.O. Box 37012 MRC 570, Washington DC 20013-7012.

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## Airmail

“Postal Labels Redux” by Arthur H. Groten illustrates labels used on airmail originating in several countries. *ASDC* 112, July[-August 2017.

## Postcards

“Censorship of Seaside Saucy Postcards” by Graham Mark illustrates the various censor approval markings used under an At of 1933 - from Blackpool and from the Isle of Man - into the 1950s. *PH* 362 June 2017.

## World War I

“Another WWI ‘Undercover’ Address Uncovered” by Ed Fraser illustrates four covers addressed to the *Service gratuit pour la transmission de la correspondance entre civils* (Free service for forwarding of mail to civilians) at No. 4 Rue Petitot, Geneva. The four covers originate in three different countries (Canada, Great Britain, and Austria-Hungary) and it is likely that all of them were destined for the German-occupied areas of northeastern France, Belgium, and Luxembourg. (*BNA Topics* No. 551, Second Qtr 2017, pp. 32-41)

## Australia

“Some Aspects of Australian Mail Contracts 1844-1860” by Colin Tabcart summarizes the attempts to provide a monthly mail service to and from the Australian Colonies. *PH* 362 June 2017.

## Canada

“A Review of the 2 cent Large Queen Soldier’s Letter’s Claim of Red River Rebellion Association” by David Hobden debunks recently-made claims that a July 29, 1870 soldier’s letter is related to the 1869 Metis rebellion at the Red River Colony in Manitoba. By locating the sender in regimental medal and muster rolls, the author demonstrates that he was not involved in the Red River rebellion. (*PHSC Journal* No. 165, Spr 2016, pp. 54-58)

“Mails to Canada from Australasia and Southeast Asia in Late 1941 and Early 1942” by Robert Toombs and Gary Scrimgeour describes air and surface routes used for mail service between Canada and Britain’s other colonies and dominions in the Pacific region, including Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and Fiji. (*PHSC Journal* No. 164, Win 2015-2016, pp. 24-32)

“The ‘D.w.’ Handstamp: A New Theory” by Chris Hargreaves revisits the mystery of the still-unexplained boxed D.w. handstamps found on some first flight covers between approximately 1930 and 1932. (*BNA Topics* No. 551, Second Qtr 2017, pp. 23-31)

“Once Was Not Enough: Civil War Era Documents Showing Two or More Taxes, Dual-Nation Stamping: Canada” by Michael Mahler illustrates Canadian revenue stamps, as well as the sole recorded instance of an Ontario Common Fund stamp used in 1869 and one in the same year for Lower Canada (Quebec), with background about the revenue laws and the context of the documents. *ASDC* 112, July-Aug 2017.

### **Caribbean**

“The Tudway Letters: Port of Entry Markings” by Mary Gleadall surveys port of entry markings on private ship letters from the correspondence of the Tudway family of Antigua. One hundred and seventy-three examples were noted between 1751 and 1858, with Portsmouth and Deal providing the most examples (27 each). (*British Caribbean Philatelic Journal* No. 236, Apr-Jun 2017, pp. 14-16)

“The Venezuelan Crisis of 1902-03 Seen through the Window of Trinidad Postal History” by Edward Barrow. When Venezuelan President Cipriano Castro threatened to default on his country’s European debts, Great Britain, Germany and Italy imposed a naval blockade that resulted in Castro submitting to international arbitration of the matter. The island nation of Trinidad, only ten miles off the coast of Venezuela, became a coaling station for the vessels involved and handled a great deal of their mail. (*British Caribbean Philatelic Journal* No. 264, Jul-Sep 2017, pp. 4-9)

“Danish West Indies Three Cents Printed Matter Rate from 1874 to 1901 and ‘Samples of No Value’” by Arnold Sorenson attempts to untangle two separate three-cent rates that existed in the DWI: an 1872-1877 three-cent printed matter treaty rate between Denmark and Germany, and the UPU “samples and patterns” rate in effect from 1877. The author argues that these two distinct rates are frequently conflated, and chronicles examples that he contends have been misdescribed by collectors, exhibitors, and auction houses. Eight full-color illustrations, extracts from period postal regulations, and a rate table help the reader to tell the difference between examples of the two rates. An additional two-cent rate for “samples of no value” is also described and illustrated. (*Post Horn* No. 292, Third Qtr 2017, pp. 8-19)

### **China**

“Shanghai Dah Tung Dr. Sun Yat-sen” by H. James Maxwell covers the ninth issue of Sun Yat-sen definitive stamps, printed in Shanghai by the Dah Tung Printing Works starting in 1946. Much of the text is dedicated to details of the stamps and their production, but there is a postage rate chart for the period October 1945-December 1947 and nine illustrated pages of uses on cover with rate analysis. (*China Clipper* No. 464, Jan 2017, pp. 45-60)

### **Cuba**

“The Use of Oval Cancelers to Indicate the Payment of Postage” by Yamil H. Kouri, Jr. describes the nineteenth-century Cuban custom of using canceling devices to indicate prepayment of postage when stamps were not available. This usage is mainly observed on government mail; examples on ordinary mail and foreign correspondence arriving in or transiting Cuba are more unusual. The practice flourished from 1858 to 1869. (*Cuban Philatelist* No. 79, Jan-Apr 2017, pp. 9-13)

### **Dutch East Indies**

“Timor: One of a Kind?” By Clyde J. Women describes a cover sent by the Netherlands Trading Company aboard the S.S. *Reijniersz* launched in 1908 - underpaid as it was assumed to be internal mail to the Dutch not the Portuguese half of Timor. CCP vol 96 no 5 Sept-Oct 2017.

### **Finland**

“The Saarinen Issue Reflects Finland’s History: The Model and its Uses after 1918 Civil War” by Ari Muhonen briefly describes and illustrates military, inflationary, and Zeppelin uses of the first stamps issued by independent Finland. (*Post Horn* No. 291, Second Qtr 2017, pp. 20-25)

### **France**

“An Introduction to the French Precursor Postcards of 1873” by Peter R.A. Kelly focuses on early commercial uses of precursor postcards in France. From 1873 to 1875 only officially produced and stamps postcards were permitted; beginning in October 1875 private printing of postcards was allowed. The “La Rouennaise” find of registered precursor postcards is described. Liberally illustrated with examples of postally used cards accompanied by rate analysis. (*France and Colonies Philatelist* No. 327, Jan 2017, pp. 6-11)

“Toulon France and its RF Overprints during WWII” by Lewis Bussey chronicles the use of “RF” overprints on French naval mail originating from Toulon, France after that port city was liberated in August of 1944. Following a brief discussion of cancel and overprint types particular to Toulon, the author explores censored, double weight, and late uses as well as those originating from naval vessels, shore facilities, and a submarine. Only 102 genuine RF covers from Toulon are known. (*France and Colonies Philatelist* No. 329, Jul 2017, pp. 74-85)

“French Participation in Quelling the Boxer Rebellion and its Aftermath” by Stanley J. Luft examines mail sent by French troops and marines with the allied expeditionary force against the Boxer Rebellion in China, with an emphasis on administrative cachets and naval markings. (*France and Colonies Philatelist* No. 328, Apr 2017, pp. 43-47)

### **French Colonies**

“Daguin Machine Cancels in Maroc” by Larry Gardner presents a sampling of Moroccan uses of the canceling machine developed by Eugene Daguin in 1884. Originally designed to print a “double” postmark—with one serving as a killer to cancel the stamp and the other being a true postmark—the machines were first employed at Morocco in 1916. By this time, however, they had been reengineered so that one of the double postmarks was replaced with a boxed slogan cancel. Examples are illustrated from Casablanca, Tangier, Marrakesh, Fez, and other cities. (*France and Colonies Philatelist* No. 329, Jul 2017, pp. 67-73)

### **Germany**

“The Turret Handstamp from Hamburg” by Heinrich Mimberg is a translation of an explanation of this transatlantic mark - used 1799 to 1802 and after 1819, in conjunc-



tion with a Thur and Taxis marking for mail from the U.S. CCP vol 96 no 5 Sept-Oct 2017.

“Early Bank Note Covers to Germany and Via German Mail” by H. Jeffrey Braham reviews the postal conventions between the U.S. and the North German Union, beginning in 1867, continuing with reduced direct rates as of July 1, 1870. Illustrated are covers rated before and after the reductions as well as two sent at the higher closed mail rate via German mails, to Rome. *Chron.* 255, Vol 69 no 3 August 2917.

“An Early Westbound Bremen-Mail Letter and the First Three Round Trips of the Pioneer Steamer Washington” by Friedrich A. Meyer reviews the path of a letter from the U.S. Consulate in Leipzig, the Kingdom of Saxony and does a masterful job of providing the background to the postal arrangements with Germany by First Assistant Postmaster Selah R. Hobbie, as well as the shipping history of the Washington’s first three voyages, both east and west. *Chron.* 255, Vol 69 no 3 August 2917.

### **Great Britain**

“The Plymouth to Bristol (Foreign Mails) TPO” by Keith Morris explains the origins of the Plymouth to Bristol Traveling Post Office. In the late 1850s and ’60s, as the South Devon and Great Western railways connected Plymouth to Bristol and the rest of the country, a number of British shipping companies trading in Africa and the Caribbean moved their operations from Falmouth to Plymouth. The Plymouth to Bristol TPO began operating in 1869, sorting incoming foreign mail from vessels calling at Plymouth, and operated until at least 1907. The TPO was unique in that it was a one-way system; mail was carried and sorted during the 120-mile journey to Bristol but the sorting carriages were returned to Plymouth empty. Numerous postmark types and “to pay” markings are illustrated and identified. (*Gibbons Stamp Monthly* 48:2, Jul 2017, pp. 68-71)

“United Kingdom Stamp & Post Office Mechanization Development: Luminescent Materials, Automated Mail Handling and the Postcode 1935-2013” by Steve McGill summarizes modern British advancements in mail sorting and cancelling. The Dollis Hill postal research station experiments into phosphorescent tagging are covered in great detail, including chemical formulae and reflectance spectra for the various taggants. This article is chiefly concerned with the engineering and chemical aspects of modern postal history—including lots of photographs of machinery—but postal history is illustrated and described with a view to helping the reader recognize the markings made by various types of equipment. The period covered extends to 2013 and the four-state barcode (often referred to as the ‘intelligent’ barcode in the U.S. (*Congress Book* 2016, pp. 160-200)

### **Japan**

“Cash Registration from 1951 to Today” by Anker Nielsen describes and illustrates uses of the various envelopes issued by Japan for registered domestic cash letters. The author includes rate tables for cash registration, normal registration, and express service from 1951 to the present, and provide examples that illustrate how to figure out how much cash was inside the envelope. (*Japanese Philately* No. 423, Aug 2017, pp. 228-237)

### **Malta**

“Printed Matter Wrappers of Malta” by John K. Courtis documents 11 examples of privately-produced, postally-used Maltese printed matter wrappers. These originated either with businesses such as *The Times* of Malta newspaper and Shell Company, or else private organizations including the Malta Chamber of Commerce and Malta Philatelic Society. (*Journal of the Malta Philatelic Society* 45:3, Dec 2016, pp. 35-43)

### **Morocco**

“The Coins Issue of Morocco” by Khalid Benziane and Thierry Sanchez continues their study of this series of stamps and their uses. CCP vol 96 no 5 Sept-Oct 2017.

### **Poland**

“Beginnings of the Post in the Independent Republic of Poland, November 1918-1920” by Julian Auleytner recounts the difficulties encountered by the Polish government in setting up a national postal system after World War I. “Relatively little documentary evidence remains from the period,” the author contends, because many covers were pillaged for their stamps. Recipients desired them as souvenirs of independence, while postmen routinely removed them to sell to collectors and supplement their pay. Many of the covers that did survive the period were destroyed during World War II. Despite these predations the author is able to illustrate nearly four dozen pieces of mail and postal forms exhibiting mixed frankings as well as provisional uses of German, Austrian, Russian and Ukrainian cancels and forms. The creation of Poland’s postal directorates involved grafting the new national system onto the remains of the former postal establishments and contending with ongoing military operations against Bolshevik Russia in the directorates of Vilnius and Lviv. (*Congress Book* 2016, pp. 1-53)

### **Russia**

“The Acceptance of Postal Correspondence Recorded in Private Registry Books” by Lev Ratner (David M. Skipton, trans.) reexamines the scarce, privately-produced “po chastnoy knige” auxiliary markings found on some Russian registered mail from 1898 until the end of the Imperial period. Following the German example, Russia allowed certain mailers to maintain their own logbooks of outgoing registered mail and present them at the post office at the time of mailing. Postal officials could then verify the entries in the sender’s book without having to write them on the spot, speeding up acceptance of registered mail. (*Rossica* No. 168, Spr 2017, pp. 30-36)

“Letters from the Rocket Island Gorodomlya” by Alexey Babochkin (Nikolai Sorokin, trans.) examines markings found on mail sent by scientists and engineers relocated from Soviet-occupied Germany to Gorodomlya Island in Lake Seliger to work on the Soviet rocket program. The research and development operation there lasted from 1946 until about 1953. (*Rossica* No. 168, Spr 2017, pp. 74-78)

“The Era of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type: Locally Fabricated Auxiliary Markings” by Edward Grabowski reports several newly-discovered varieties of handstamp markings: a 1913 registration handstamp from Dahomey; a CHARGE marking on a 1901 declared value letter from Madagascar, and a RETOUR A L’ENVOYER

marking on a remarkable 1896 letter from Papeete, French Polynesia to the New Mexico territory. (*France and Colonies Philatelist* No. 327, Jan 2017, pp. 3-5)

### **South America**

“Guatemala, the Caribbean Ports in the Prestamp Era” by James Mazepa treats a long-neglected subject: the postal history of Guatemala’s Caribbean coast ports of Santo Tomás (later Matias de Galvez), Castillo de San Filipe del Golfo, and Izabal. He begins with early Spanish mail, and several of the covers illustrated in this section are the earliest or only known examples. In the post-colonial period, Izabal replaced Golfo as Guatemala’s primary exchange office for overseas mail. The development of routes from Izabal to the interior and to Belize, as well as the role of mail forwarders, is covered in detail. Perhaps the most fascinating material concerns the postal history of the short-lived Belgian colony at Santo Tomás. Actively promoted by King Leopold I as a way of extending Belgian influence into the western hemisphere, the colony founded in 1842 fell victim to the same privations that had doomed the earlier British Eastern Coast Company colony: yellow fever and malaria. (*Congress Book* 2016, pp. 54-76)

### **Ukraine**

“Ukraine’s Vienna Issue: a nine-decade journey to postal fulfillment” by Ingrid Kuzych Provides a thorough history of the design, printing, distribution and commemoration of this 1920 series of stamps. *Cong. Book* 2017.

### **Journal Abbreviations**

*The American Stamp Dealer & Collector*, ASDA, P.O. Box 692, Leesport PA 19533.

*BNA Topics*. Journal of the British North America Philatelic Society. Andy Ellwood, Secretary. 10 Doris Ave., Gloucester, Ontario K1T 3W8, Canada.

*British Caribbean Philatelic Journal*. Eric Todd, Secretary. 623 Ashley St, Foxboro, Ontario K0K 2B0, Canada.

*China Clipper*. Journal of the China Stamp Society. Tracy L. Shew, Secretary. 16836 122nd Ave SE, Renton WA 98058-6055.

*The Chronicle of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues*, Sec. Dwayne Littauer, P.O. Box 750368, New Orleans LA 70175.

*The Collectors Club Philatelist*, 22 East 35th St., New York NY 10016-3806.

*The Congress Book*, Sec/Treas. Chuck Wooster, 3991 Gulf Shore Blvd., N., Apt. 301, Naples FL 34103.

*Cuban Philatelist*. Journal of the Cuban Philatelic Society of America. Juan Farah, Secretary. PO Box 141656, Coral Gables, FL 33114-1656.

*France and Colonies Philatelist*. Journal of the France and Colonies Philatelic Society. Joel L. Bromberg, Corresponding Secretary. PO Box 17, Narrowsburg NY 12764-0017.

*Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. Stanley Gibbons Ltd., 7 Parkside, Christchurch Rd, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 3SH, United Kingdom.

*Japanese Philately*. Journal of the International Society for Japanese Philately. William Eisenhauer, Secretary. PO Box 230462, Tigard OR 97281.

*Journal of the Malta Philatelic Society*. John A. Cardona, Secretary-Treasurer. 56 Triq Santa Marija, Tarxien, TXN 1703, Malta.

*PHSC Journal*. Journal of the Postal History Society of Canada. Secretary-Treasurer, 10 Summerhill Ave, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1A8, Canada.

*Post Horn*. Journal of the Scandinavia Collectors Club. Alan Warren, Secretary. PO Box 39, Exton PA 19341-0039.

*Postal History, The Journal of the Postal History Society* [UK] 22 Burton Crescent, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 6BT UK.

*Rossica*. Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately. Steve Volis, Treasurer. 9 Hickory Ct, Manalapan NJ 07726.

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## Postal History Medal

Given at the judges' discretion.

Report by awards chair, **Douglas N. Clark**



**Southeastern Stamp Expo** (January 27-29, 2017, Atlanta, GA):

Alfredo Frohlich, "Colombia: Postal History of the Forwarding Agents."

**Sarasota Nat'l Stamp Exhibition** (February 3-5, 2017, Sarasota, FL): Patricia Stilwell Walker, "Baltimore postal History from Colonial times to the UPU."

**Westpex** (April 28-30, 2017, San Francisco, CA): Wieslaw Kostka, "Kingdom of Poland - Study of rates for stampless mail 1815-71."

**Philatelic Show** (May 5-7, 2027, Boxboro, MA) (PHS Annual Meeting)

Postal History Grand: Murray Abramson, "Expansion of US Airmail to foreign destinations (1922-1941)"

Vermeil: Carol Bommarito, "Adhesive stamp usage on trans-Atlantic mail to and from the US (1840-1875)."

Silver: Stephen Suffet, "Rates and usages of the US 1c presidential series stamp, 1938-1958."

Bronze: William Schultz, "5c domestic rates-US acts of 1845-1851, stampless era."

**ROPEX** (May 18-19, 2017, Rochester, NY): Anthony F. Dewey, "A Postal History of Hartford, Connecticut."

**Rocky Mountain Stamp Show** (May 26-28, 2017, Denver, CO): Albert L. Briggs, "Domestic rates and usages of the United States presidential series." Edith M. Falstich Award.

**MERPEX** (August 5 and 6, 2016 in Marlton NJ): Dr. Gianluigi Soldati, "German Military Censorship With Chemical Testing In Europe During World War II."

## President's Message by Yamil Kouri

Thanks to a generous grant from the United States Stamp Society (USSS) ([www.us-stamps.org](http://www.us-stamps.org)) the American Philatelic Research Library ([www.stamplibrary.org](http://www.stamplibrary.org)) will digitize in full color every past issue of the *Postal History Journal*, except for the two most recent years, and make them available online to all in a searchable PDF format. It is estimated that 11,680 pages will be digitized. The entire contents of issues number 143 to 161, from June 2009 to June 2015, as well as the table of contents of the most recent journals published in the last two years, are already available for download at our website, [www.postalhistorysociety.org](http://www.postalhistorysociety.org). We are very grateful to the USSS for this effort to promote postal history research.

## U.S. Postal History Compendium, a review by Terrence Hines

*Aspects of American Postal History*. Edited by Peter Martin. La Posta Publications, Box 6074, Fredericksburg, VA 22403. 8.5 by 11 in., 224 pages, hardbound, \$65.00 plus \$5 shipping.

The 16 chapters in this book cover a wide range of postal history topics, from the Confederacy to a modern first day cover and much in between. The chapters are beautifully illustrated in color and all are well referenced. This is a fine volume with something for almost every postal history scholar and collector. The emphasis is certainly on the more modern period. Of the 16 chapters, 12 deal largely or exclusively with 20<sup>th</sup> (or 21<sup>st</sup>) century material. There is not space to discuss each of the 16 chapters in detail so I will focus on a representative sample and try to convey the breadth of the coverage in this volume with briefer descriptions of the other chapters.

Two of the chapters that discuss 19<sup>th</sup> century postal history are among the most interesting. Patricia Kaufmann's chapter "Independent State Mail and Confederate Use of U.S. Postage" highlights that fuzzy interim period after which a state had succeeded from the Union but before it had joined the Confederacy. The first succession was South Carolina, December 20, 1860. The Confederate post office didn't come into existence until June 1, 1861. Kaufmann outlines how postal affairs were handled during this interim period. It's a fascinating and well-told story.

Jesse Spector uses two covers to illustrate "A Philatelic Exploration of American Slavery." One letter, a stampless cover from 1843, is sealed with a pro-abolitionist label. The other is an 1866 stamped cover addressed from Massachusetts to Connecticut. The interesting slavery-related feature of this cover is a black "cachet" showing a skull and crossbones above the letters "M.Y.O.B." standing for "Mind Your Own Business," presumably an anti-abolitionist message. Unfortunately, the author doesn't mention whether this marking was applied by handstamp or if this was a piece of pre-printed stationery. Nonetheless, the story of these covers and their contents, and their relationship to the history of slavery shows how postal history can complement even familiar historical narratives. The article also shows the importance of reading the contents of our stampless covers and envelopes, if contents still exist in the latter case.

The longest chapter, at 23 pages, is by Christine Sanders. She gives a fine history of Christmas day postmarks, from very early, 1793, through 1899. Mail processing proceeded pretty normally on December 25 to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. To lighten her paper, Sanders shows a few revenue stamps cancelled on Christmas as well as Confederate states covers with December 25 postmarks.

At the more recent end of the historical time line, Ralph H. Nafziger writes about the 1948 Oregon Territory commemorative (Scott # 964) and its first day covers. The first day was August 14, 1949 in Oregon City, Oregon. FDCs, especially the modern ones that are not cancelled on the first day nor in the first day city, are questionable in my view as postal history items. However, Nafziger shows in his article covers postmarked on the first day in the first day city that are franked with multiple copies of the



stamp paying different domestic (i.e., special delivery) and international rates. These do add a postal history aspect to the topic.

Kelvin Kindahl deals with “modern contract stations” such as those found in Hallmark stores and in other businesses outside of traditional post office buildings. Although these are quite rare in the United States, they are much more common in Canada and the United Kingdom. It is thanks to the powerful postal unions that these convenient contract stations are rare. They were just pulled from Staples stores because postal unions objected. Kindahl points out that the USPS has been terrible in keeping records of the locations and durations of such contract stations. It took years and a Freedom of Information Act request to get the USPS to provide such basic information. Why the USPS treats such data like an important national secret can best be explained by bureaucratic stupidity. Because of this, little is known about these stations and their postmarks are often very rare.

Between the older and the very modern, other subjects covered include articles on unusual uses of the Liberty series (by Roland Austin) and the Presidential series (by Albert Briggs) definitives. There is a chapter on Chicago tunnel mail, mail censorship in Alaska during World War II, Oklahoma hotel covers, auxiliary postal markings, highway post offices, the 1905 Portland Oregon exposition stations, Drummond Island Michigan, military postal history, and Cortlandt Street in New York City.

## **Prexies, a review by Alan Warren**

*Prexie Era Stamp Production and Postal History 1938-1962*, ed. Louis Fiset. 284 pages, 8 ¼ by 11 inches, card covers, perfect binding, American Philatelic Society, Bellefonte PA, 2017. ISBN 978-0-933580-81-7, \$39 to APS members (\$43 for non-members) plus \$2 shipping within USA, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte PA 16823-1367 or [www.stamps.org](http://www.stamps.org).

The 1938 Fifth Bureau issue or the Presidential Series, better known as the Prexies to generations of collectors, has captured the attention of many in the philatelic community. The more serious students of these stamps have yielded countless articles, several books, and numerous exhibits—testaments to the popularity of this set of definitives.

Editor Louis Fiset has drawn together nine authors to compile this new book. “New” may not be the best term as portions of some of these articles have appeared in various journals. However there is much new material, and new finds of the uses of these stamps continue to come to light, to the joy of those who collect this material. As might be expected from the book’s title, readers will find more than just Prexie issues as they were often used in combination with other contemporary stamps. Given that the period under review is nearly 25 years, commemoratives, and especially airmail stamps also play important roles in these articles.

The production aspect is described by Albert “Chip” Briggs using the 3-cent Jefferson stamp, from design through die proofs, plate numbers, electric eye markings, and anomalies like EFOs during the printing of the various formats of sheets, coils, and booklet panes. Briggs follows production with a chapter on uses of the stamp with fas-

cinating origins, destinations, illustrated mail, bisect use, certificate of mailing, crash mail, and many classes of mail service.

Bill DiPaolo tackles the production of the coil format showing splices, paste-ups, leader strips, and paper and perforation problems. He also follows his coil production discourse with a chapter on postal history of this format with some stunning examples. Bob Hohertz focuses on second, third, and fourth class uses of the Prexies in three chapters. Again, the variety of examples seen with services like registered, insured, special delivery, air mail, COD and others reveals a very rich field for collectors.

The Transport Air Mail stamps are considered brethren of the Prexies during the 1940s. Joseph Bock launches into a study of uses of the 50-cent value. The 1940s also brought about unusual mailing conditions due to World War II. Dann Mayo contributes an extensive discussion of postal censorship prior to Pearl Harbor, civilian censorship during the war, and post WW II censorship under events of occupation and unrest during the late 1940s and 1950s.

Military censorship during the Prexie era is explored by Collyer Church with examples of how the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard handled their mails. A separate chapter by Ralph Nafziger studies civilian censorship on United States first day covers in the Prexie era. Editor Louis Fiset contributes a chapter on the effects of the closure of the Mediterranean air space for air mail routes in 1940.

Another article by Fiset details the resumption of mail service to Europe in the 1944-1948 period. He provides a useful table of the dates for the resumption of postcard, letter, air mail, registered, and special delivery services, not only to European countries but many Asian ones as well.

The book ends with two chapters by veteran Prexie collector Stephen Suffet. The first one dwells on the twilight of the Prexie era, i.e. their use after the Liberty series began to appear in 1954. Steve shows mixed use of both series of stamps, use of Prexies for postage due, the introduction of certified mail, air mail to Pitcairn Island, the \$5 value on registered mail, and use on a QSL card and other unusual examples.

Steve's final contribution is an illustrated essay on suggestions for collecting and exhibiting the Prexies. Ideas include solo use, multiples of the same denomination on cover, single service like air mail or registered mail uses, and the precancels among others.

This book teaches readers not only about the Prexies but also about United States postal history in general during the 1940s and 1950s. The Presidential Series, considered "modern" in many respects, offers many possibilities for collectors to focus their efforts to acquire and exhibit specialized aspects of postal history of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

The cover illustrations are generously large. The many different authors bring together a variety of viewpoints and expertise to help the reader understand the popularity and the challenges that this series of stamps, and its contemporaries, have to offer. An extensive bibliography of books and articles will lead collectors into many related avenues for further study.

Caution: Librarians should catalog the book using the title on the title page instead of that on the front cover, which has different phrasing.

<sup>1</sup> Stanley M. Bierman, M.D., *More of the World's Greatest Stamp Collectors*, Linn's Stamp News 1990. "Dr. Carroll Chase, Father of Scientific Philately." Page 50.

<sup>2</sup> [Robert Dalton Harris] "Delf Norona" *P.S. a quarterly journal of postal history*, whole number 18, August 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Delf Norona, *The American Philatelist* September 1928, page 819.

<sup>4</sup> *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History Volume 1 Articles 1 to 16 Published Under Supervision of the Handbook Committee of the American Philatelic Society, Inc. Edited and Published by Delf Norona*, Moundsville, W.Va. 1933. Article 3 "Railroad Postmarks (1838 to 1861" by Carroll Chase, Page 18 of 18 pages.

<sup>5</sup> *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History Volume 2 Articles 17 to 33 Published Under Supervision of the Handbook Committee of the American Philatelic Society, Inc. Edited and Published by Delf Norona*, New Martinsville, W.Va., 1935, Article 31, "Distribution of Mail by Railroads in New England (to 1882)".

<sup>6</sup> C.W. Remele, *United States Railroad Postmarks 1837 to 1861*, The American Philatelic Society 1958. Page 3.

<sup>7</sup> 3c. '51-'57 *Chronicle*, issue 6, December 5, 1949//issue 12, December 10, 1951, publication of Unit No. 11 of the American Philatelic Society.

<sup>8</sup> Remele, op cit.

<sup>9</sup> Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks*, Mobile Post Office Society, Tucson AZ 1986

<sup>10</sup> Towle, page 317.

<sup>11</sup> Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris, "Modeling Postal History with Postal Numbers" in *Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately* Akron OH 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks Historical Supplement, Railway Historical Notes*, 1986.

<sup>13</sup> Towle, page XLIX

<sup>14</sup> Alvin F. Allow, *Steelways of New England*, NY 1946, pages 286-8.

<sup>15</sup> Edward Chase Kirkland, *Men, Cities and Transportation, A Study in New England History 1820-1900*, Harvard University Press 1948, page 62 ff. Also: Martha & Murray Zimiles, *Early American Mills*, New York 1973, page 166 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Henry D. Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, with an introduction by John McPhee, Princeton University Press 1980, pages 79 to 187.

<sup>17</sup> Louis C. Hunter, *A History of Industrial Power in the United States, 1780-1930*, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1979, pages 182, 186, 194-5.